Feb. 2, 1998

THE NEW YORKER

Price $3.00

#BXBCMCJ****CAR-RT SORT**C030
#ABE0240C092 1#648312 0X

NEWS
DEC 14 98
YEU1
BETSY AMBER
240 E CHESTUT ST #0253
W CHESTER PA 19380-2726

DISTANT THUNDER, COLD AS STONE,

Naught-to-sixty in 5.7 seconds.* Once a figment of the

A V8 SCREAMS DOWN FROM ITS THRONE.

imagination, now a fixture of intimidation. All courtesy of

ONE BY ONE, EACH CAR SUCCUMBS.

the 300-horsepower, 32-valve V8** which seethes within

SOMETHING WICKED

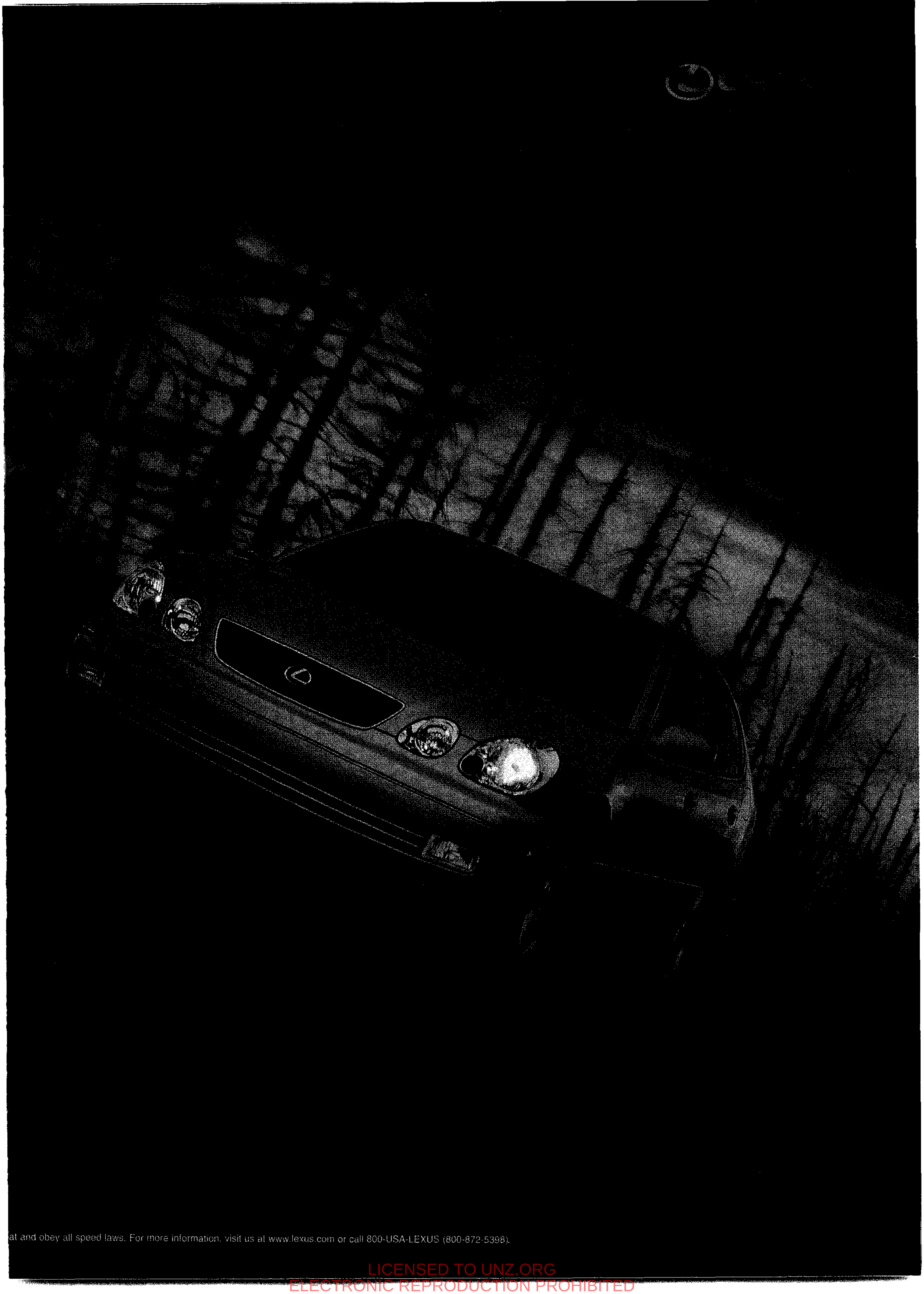
this, the fiercest automatic sedan in the world.

THIS WAY COMES.

THE NEW GS

FASTER. SLEEKER. MEANER.

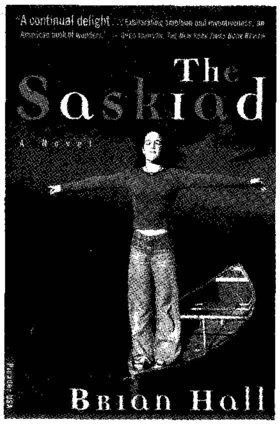
*Motor Trend, November 1997. **300-hp V8 available on the GS 400 model only. ©1998 Lexus, a Division of Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. Lexus reminds you to wear seatbelts, secure children in r



at and obey all speed laws. For more information, visit us at www.lexus.com or call 800-USA-LEXUS (800-872-5398).

"Some books open at the touch like an enchanted door..."*

NOW IN PAPERBACK



THE SASKIAD
BY BRIAN HALL

"...So it is with The Saskiad, *the inspired coming-of-age story of Saskia.... A novel wise in the complexities of adolescence and the human heart."*

—THE WASHINGTON POST BOOK WORLD*

"Beautiful... Saskia speaks in a pastiche of received languages, most of them—like the shards of the Odyssey that crop up everywhere—grandiose, stilted, and unexpectedly lovely."

—THE NEW YORKER

"Richly imagined...lyrical and compelling."

—THE LOS ANGELES TIMES BOOK REVIEW

AT BOOKSTORES EVERYWHERE
What to read next
PICADOR
USA

THE NEW YORKER

FEBRUARY 2, 1998

COMMENT Low Noon . . . . *Joe Klein* 4
The unmaking of a President.

THE MAIL 7

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN 8

THE TALK OF THE TOWN 25
Jane Mayer reports on the conservative literary agent who got Linda Tripp to press the RECORD button; etc.

DEPARTMENTS

Annals of Politics Is Sex Necessary? . . . . *David Remnick* 30
The obsession that might save Clinton from ruin.

The Culture Industry Golden Globalization . . . . *Kurt Andersen* 33

Reflections The Whistle of Money . . . . *James Atlas* 34
How do you ignore it when everyone around you is in its trance?

Our Far-Flung Correspondents New Orleans Unmasked . . . . . *Calvin Trillin* 38
What's behind Mardi Gras? A history of the city's complex society.

ANNALS OF MEDICINE The Pima Paradox . . . . *Malcolm Gladwell* 44
Doctors studying obesity have made a discovery that gives new hope to the war on fat.

SHOWCASE John Leguizamo . . . . *Max Vadukul, John Lahr* 48

AT THE MUSEUMS Robert Delaunay . . . . *Calvin Tomkins* 54

LIFE AND LETTERS Your Story, My Story . . . . *A. Alvarez* 58
The life that Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath could not overcome.

FICTION "The Sun, the Moon, the Stars" . . . . *Junot Díaz* 66
White beaches, a hot sun, and the sea—what could go wrong?

THE CRITICS

Books Peggy Noonan's "Simply Speaking" . . . . *Hendrik Hertzberg* 72
Briefly Noted 78
The Theatre "Ragtime" . . . . *John Lahr* 79
The Current Cinema "The Gingerbread Man," "The Apostle" . . . *Daphne Merkin* 81

POEMS BY TED HUGHES

"Fulbright Scholars," "Fidelity" 60
"A Pink Wool Knitted Dress," "A Dream" 61
"The Literary Life," "The Minotaur" 62
"Robbing Myself," "Freedom of Speech" 63

CROSSWORD 8 x 10 Cryptic No. 31 83

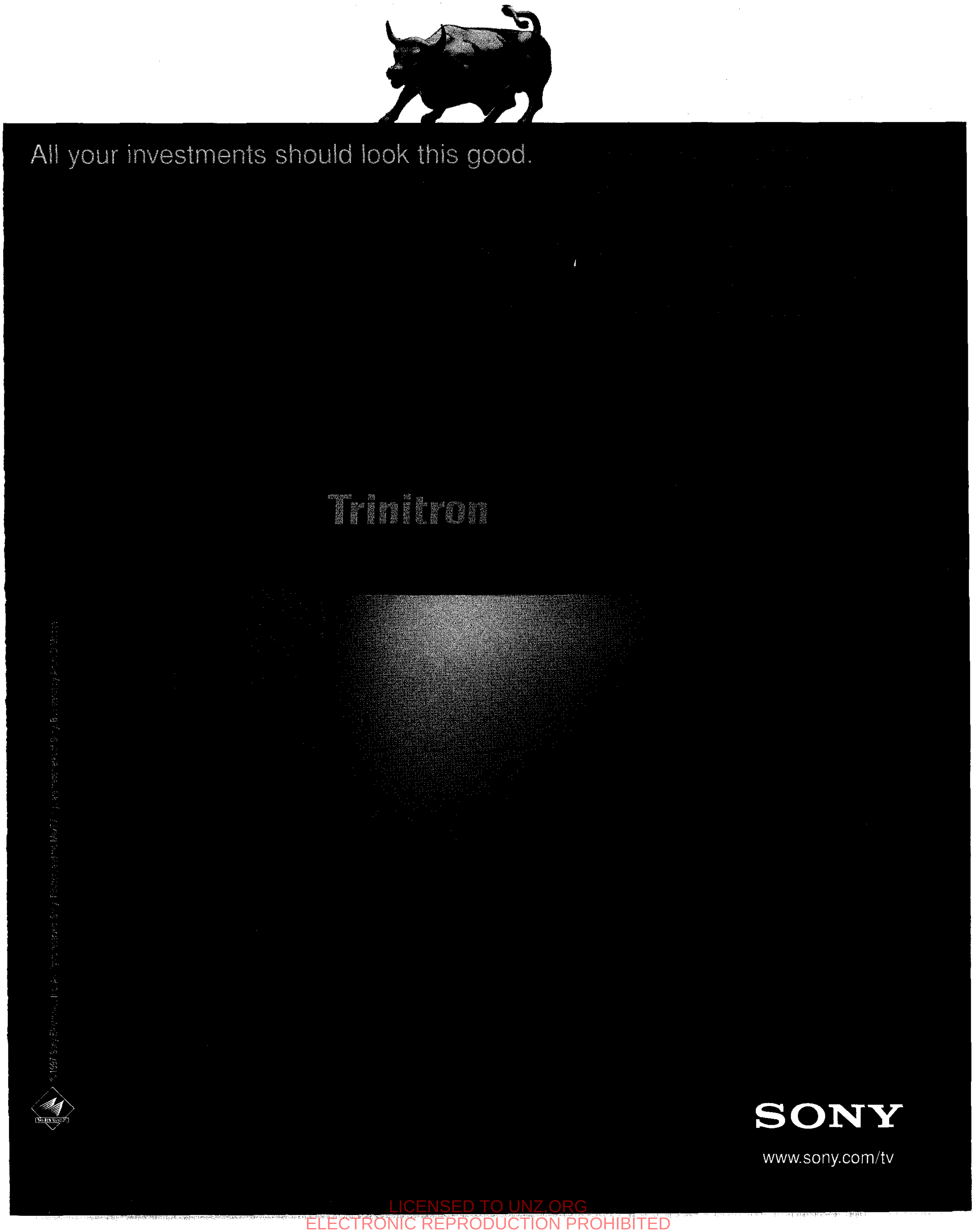
SHOUTS & MURMURS In-Flight Survey . . . . *Christopher Buckley* 84

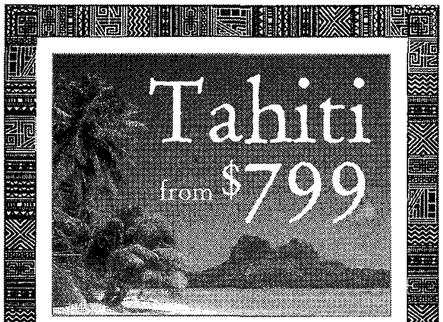
COVER *"A Certain Sense of His Own Importance," by J. J. Sempé*

DRAWINGS *Bruce Eric Kaplan, Danny Shanahan, Michael Crawford, Peter Steiner, J. B. Handelsman, Charles Barsotti, Lee Lorenz, Robert Weber, Leo Cullum, Frank Cotham, Roz Chast, Bernard Schoenbaum, Arnie Levin, Mick Stevens*

THE NEW YORKER (ISSN 0028-792X), published weekly (except for seven combined issues: Feb. 23 & Mar. 2, Apr. 27 & May 4, June 22 & 29, Aug. 24 & 31, Oct. 19 & 26, Dec. 14 & 21, Dec. 28 & Jan. 4) by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc., 20 W. 43rd St., N.Y., N.Y. 10036. Vol. LXXIII, No. 45, February 2, 1998. Periodical postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Authorized as second-class mail by the Post Office Department, Ottawa, Canada, and for payment of postage in cash. Canadian Publication Mail Sales Product Agreement No.190969. Canadian goods-and-services-tax registration number R123242885. Registered as a newspaper at the British Post Office. Subscription rates: In U.S. and possessions, one year, $39.95; two years, $72.00. In Canada, one year, $83.00 (includes GST and HST where applicable). In Germany, one year, DM290. Mail orders to: IP Internationale Presse, Distribution & Marketing GmbH, Waldstr. 70, D-63128 Dietzenbach, Germany. Other foreign subscriptions, one year, $91.00, payable in advance.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The New Yorker, Box 56447, Boulder, Colorado 80328-6447. PRINTED IN U.S.A.


All your investments should look this good.
Trinitron
SONY
www.sony.com/tv



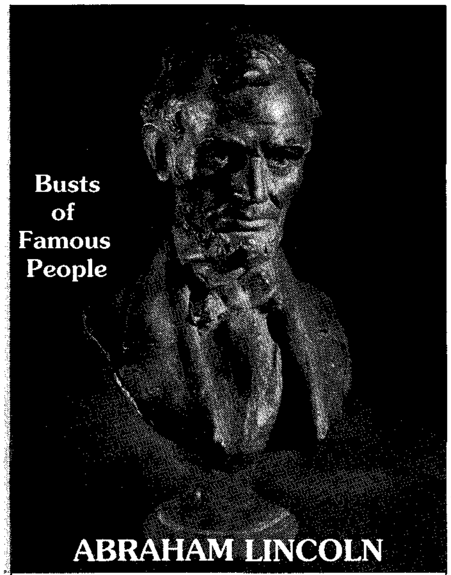
8 days/7 nights
Non-stop non-smoking roundtrip air
from LAX on **AOM**, Inter island air
travel, 7 nights in the lagoon front
Cook's Bay Hotel Moorea.
Easter Island, Fiji, Australia and
other vacation options available.

For reservations & information,
call your travel agent or:
800-687-1002
Visit us on the web at: www.tahitivacation.com

TAHITI VACATIONS
An Air Tahiti Company

Tahiti
AOM FRENCH AIRLINES

Prices are per person based on double occupancy and upon departing Tues. or Sun. Weekend & seasonal supplements apply. Packages valid for travel completed by 12/31/98. Prices subject to change without prior notice. Taxes/fees: $38.50. CA# 2000121-60



LINCOLN in bronze patinated bonded stone. 12¾" on alabaster base...$181 ppd. Check, VISA, MC. Unconditional guarantee. George Washington, Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson also available in same material (call for prices). Other busts in bonded marble (sizes and prices vary): Socrates, Plato, Shakespeare, Dante, Voltaire, J. Caesar, Napoleon, Joan of Arc, Kennedy, Einstein, Beethoven, Bach, Liszt, Handel, Mozart, Chopin, Verdi, Wagner. **120 page art- book color catalogue of museum reproductions $6.**

ELEGANZA LTD. *Importers of Fine Statuary*
Magnolia Village • 3217 W. Smith #542
Seattle, WA 98199 • 206/283-0609

COMMENT

LOW NOON

The President versus the pack.

THE most eloquent measure of the Clinton catastrophe was the silence that descended on Washington as news of the President's alleged affair with a White House intern—the Krakatau of bimbo eruptions—shattered the winter's political calm. The press frothed and chattered, but it was a monologue. The President's reflexive defenders—the James Carvilles and Lanny Davises—were absent from their on-camera posts; even the President's usual detractors had nothing to say. The public din soon became unimaginable, but the selective silence was what mattered: it could mark the end of what has been a truly distressing period in American public life, the contest between Bill Clinton and the Washington establishment—the press, the prosecutors—over what is appropriate public business and what is not. It has been a symbiotic downward spiral in which the antagonists have consistently succeeded in provoking the worst in each other.

The Clintonites did emerge, gradually, from their bunkers last week. But they weren't quite so brazenly offensive—in every sense of the word—as they'd been in the past. None of them had the stomach to deny with any vehemence the central assertion—that the President had entangled himself with a twenty-one-year-old White House intern. The common assumption seemed to be: He probably had. This alone could be enough to cripple, perhaps destroy, the President. But that is not the only tragedy in the making. The ongoing pursuit of the sordid—and, in many cases, marginally relevant—details by an army of reporters and prosecutors may be doing lasting damage to the future of American public service and the quality of American public life.

The President himself confirmed the seriousness of the situation by his demeanor on the day the story broke. His answers to Jim Lehrer's questions about the scandal were unconvincing. From the look of him—sagging eyes, jaw muscle working—it seemed clear that he had been up all night. But then, as the interview moved on to other issues, he shifted gears and gave focussed, intelligent answers to questions on topics ranging from Bosnia to the budget. The interview thus became a poignant reminder of two assumptions that Bill Clinton has always made about his political career: that his private behavior could be separated from his public performance, and that when reports of questionable private actions did seep out he'd be deft enough to find

---

THE NEW YORKER, 20 WEST 43RD STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10036. Thomas A. Florio, president; Pamela Maffei McCarthy, senior vice-president/deputy editor; Pamela H. Older, senior vice-president/manufacturing and information technology director; Carmen Lopez, vice-president/managing director; David M. May, vice-president/managing director; Annie Williams, vice-president/corporate marketing director; Peter Armour, vice-president/circulation director; Rhonda Pinzer Sherman, vice-president/special-projects director; Maurie Perl, vice-president/public-relations director; Robert A. Silverstone, vice-president/business manager; Richard Levine, vice-president/human-resources director; Devereux Chatillon, vice-president/general counsel. For advertising inquiries, please call Gretel Schneider, advertising director, at (212) 536-5400. THE NEW YORKER is not responsible for the return or loss of submissions, or for any damage or other injury to unsolicited manuscripts or artwork. Any submission of a manuscript or artwork must be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope of appropriate size, bearing adequate return postage. The magazine does not consider unsolicited photographs or transparencies. © 1998 by The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this periodical may be reproduced without the consent of THE NEW YORKER. The periodical's name and logo, and the various titles and headings herein, are registered trademarks of Advance Magazine Publishers, Inc., published through its division The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE: To inquire about a subscription, to change an address, or to purchase a back issue, please write to THE NEW YORKER, Box 56447, Boulder, Colorado 80328-6447, or telephone (800) 825-2510. Outside of North America, call (303) 678-0354. For a change of address, subscribers should give four weeks' notice. If possible, please send the address label from a recent issue.

a way to dodge the posse. ("They didn't get me that time, did they," he said to James Carville during the 1992 primaries.)

He now seems headed for disaster, though perhaps not in a strictly legal sense. It would be surprising if a man as careful with words as the President could be proved to have advised Monica Lewinsky, directly, to lie; it would be surprising if he did anything more than refer her to Vernon Jordan for legal assistance. So the possibility that the President might be convicted, or successfully impeached, on obstruction-of-justice or subornation-of-perjury charges is remote. A credible perjury case against the President—for his alleged assertion in a recent legal deposition that he didn't have an affair with Monica Lewinsky—might be another story. In that same deposition, Clinton reportedly admitted that, yes, he had an affair with Gennifer Flowers, after all—an admission that is likely to undermine his myriad other denials. Still, in the absence of the most spectacular sort of physical evidence, any perjury proceedings will probably dissolve into his story versus hers.

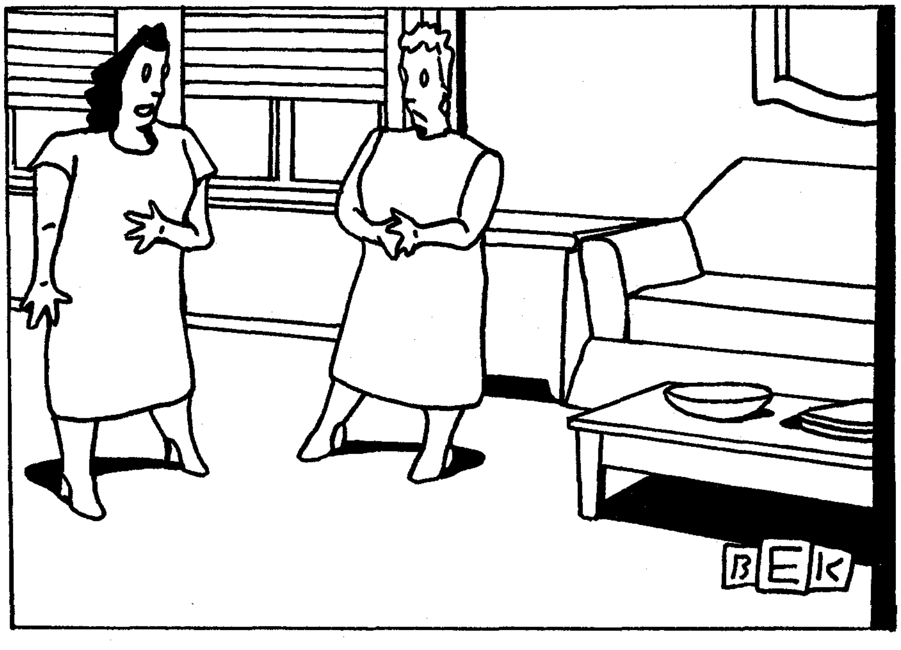
But the most significant questions about the President's future are not likely to be legal; they will be practical, political, and moral. The President's past assertions of innocence have been tolerated, if never quite believed; the current situation—an alleged affair with a very young woman—may be less easily digestible. Evidence of such an affair—the recorded conversations between Lewinsky and her friend Linda Tripp; notes and gifts between the President and the young woman—may prove to be overwhelming, if not legally conclusive. The President's political support could begin to wither; calls for his resignation might ensue. The government could be paralyzed.

And one eventual question will be the eternal Clinton question: What sort of man would risk his Presidency for such an escapade? Granted, other Presidents have gone looking for love in the steno pool. But everyone knows that the rules governing such behavior have changed in the past decade. To tempt fate on such matters—handing his opponents their wildest fantasy—seems an almost pathological lapse of judgment.

THERE is, however, another question to be addressed. It transcends this particular scandal and speaks to the noxious political atmosphere of the Clinton era. It involves the President's assuming that his private behavior is irrelevant to his public performance and that much of the investigative mania directed against him has been driven by partisan politics and feckless journalism.

He has a point. The American political process has gone a little haywire in the nineties. A prosecutorial fever obtains; media firestorms are frequent, and unreliable in their import. Public life has come to be dominated by special prosecutors, fiercely competitive investigative reporters (and their editors), and a netherworld of tipsters, advisers, investigators, para-journalists, and ideological cranks of all hues. Major newspapers have devoted disproportionate space to inconsequential—and at times, incomprehensible—non-scandals. A prosecutorial branch of the government seems to have been added to the standard three; many public officials—especially high-ranking ones, like Presidents—now face the inevitability of having personal Javerts, permanent prosecutors answerable to no one. Hence, nearly twelve million dollars of the public's money can be spent prosecuting a Secretary of Agriculture, Mike Espy—who has already resigned, his career ruined—for receiving thirty-five thousand dollars' worth of gifts from companies he was regulating (with no evidence of a quid pro quo). Hence, four million dollars of the public's money can be spent investigating a Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Henry Cisneros—who has already resigned, his career ruined—for understating payments he made to a former lover. Hence, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt seems likely to acquire a special prosecutor of his own for his role in denying Indian tribes a gambling license that probably ought to have been denied. Hence, more than twenty-five million dollars can be spent investigating a failed, and decidedly inconsequential, Arkansas real-estate deal in the distant past—an investigation that now has expanded, at the whim of its prosecutor, to include the amatory life of the President.

Clinton has brought much of this upon himself. If he has broken the law, he'll surely be punished; at the very least, his Presidency will suffer grievously. But it does seem possible that more harm has been done to American democracy by the witch-hunt mentality at loose in Washington than by any crimes or misdemeanors of the President. The present febrile atmosphere may have long-term effects, such as limiting the appetite for public life to all but the most ego-enthralled office-seekers. In the end, this could be one of those periods in history remembered more for the ferocity of their prosecutions than for the severity of their crimes. Few such eras are remembered fondly. —JOE KLEIN



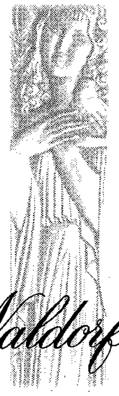
"I finally found a designer with a sweatshop that's right for me."

THE SOCIAL REGISTER.

OUR GUEST BOOK.

PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS

GETTING THE TWO CONFUSED.



The Waldorf Towers

The Waldorf Towers. It offers the ideal setting for a weekend escape. From our private entrance and lobby to our beautifully appointed executive guest rooms and suites to the exclusive benefits of our Astoria Lounge, no detail is overlooked. Experience why living well is indeed the best revenge. For reservations, call your professional travel agent, or call us at 1-888-WATOWER.

$279 per room per night

100 East 50th Street, New York, NY 10022

A member of The Leading Hotels of the World

Single or double occupancy. Taxes additional. Rates subject to availability and to change without notice. Valid from 1/1/98 through 2/8/98 on Thursday through Sunday nights. Thursday night arrival requires Saturday night stay. Not available to groups and cannot be combined with any other promotion. The Waldorf Towers is a registered trademark of Hilton Hotels Corp. © 1998 Hilton Hotels.

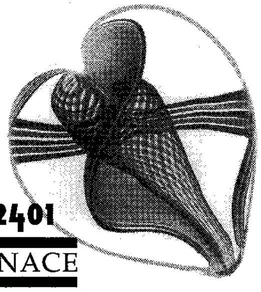
LATTICINIO
GLASS HEARTS

- Intricate Patterns
- Exquisite Colors
- Handmade USA

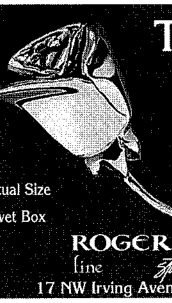
Med. (1-3/4") 26.00
In red velveteen bag

1-800-924-2401

CUNEO FURNACE



THE ROSE
Pin



Sterling Silver	$45.00
14k Gold	$220.00

Matching Earrings

Sterling Silver	$75.00
14k Gold	$440.00

Actual Size
Velvet Box

1-800-235-0471
Visa, MC, AMEX—S/H $5.75

ROGER NICHOLS
fine studios jewelry
17 NW Irving Avenue • Bend, OR 97701

Half Moon
Golf, Tennis & Beach Club
Montego Bay, Jamaica
See your travel agent or call
800-626-0592 • 876-953-2211
Member ERI/Heinz E. Simonitsch, Dir.
Web Address: http://www.halfmoon.com.jm

World's Greatest Vacation
Port Yacht Charters Discover the world of private luxury yachts with crew. Golf, tennis, diving, all water sports. Superb cuisine/world class chefs. Better than a cruise ship—priced the same. Caribbean/Worldwide. 1-800-213-0465

CONTRIBUTORS

A. ALVAREZ ("Your Story, My Story," p. 58) has been a contributor to this magazine since 1971. His books include "The Savage God" and, most recently, "Night: An Exploration of Night Life, Night Language, Sleep and Dreams." He lives in London.

DAVID REMNICK ("Is Sex Necessary?," p. 30) is the author of three books, including "The Devil Problem," a collection of his *New Yorker* articles. He is currently working on his fourth book, about the rise of Muhammad Ali.

CALVIN TRILLIN ("New Orleans Unmasked," p. 38) has been a regular contributor to *The New Yorker* since 1963. He is the author of nineteen books, including "Messages from My Father."

MALCOLM GLADWELL ("The Pima Paradox," p. 44) is working on his first book, "The Tipping Point," a study of social epidemics. His most recent article for this magazine, "The Dead Zone," about the 1918 influenza epidemic, was published last September.

J. J. SEMPÉ (cover) has contributed more than fifty covers and a hundred drawings to *The New Yorker* since 1978. He is one of the creators of the book series Le Petit Nicolas. He lives in Paris.

JUNOT DÍAZ (Fiction, p. 66) teaches creative writing at Syracuse University. He is the author of a book of short stories, "Drown," the title story of which was published in *The New Yorker* in 1996, and is writing a novel.

JANE MAYER (The Talk of the Town, p. 25) has been a political reporter for *The New Yorker* since 1995. Her most recent article, "Janet Reno, Alone," was published last December. ♦

THE MAIL

WHOSE DILEMMA?

Senator Rick Santorum (whose wife's troubled pregnancy is described in "The Senator's Dilemma," by Joe Klein, January 5th) may believe that "in no case is it necessary to kill the baby and then deliver it," but his statement casually requires that some women undergo a cesarean section, a major surgery that, although common, results in more complications and a substantially higher mortality rate than vaginal delivery. In 1983, my wife and I learned after thirty-eight weeks of gestation that our planned and much desired daughter had developed hydranencephaly, a condition that left her head grossly enlarged with fluid and her brain destroyed. She could live in utero, but she would not survive after birth. When my wife went into labor we chose vaginal delivery over cesarean section, even though that was possible only if the size of our daughter's head was reduced by removing the excess fluid, which made it more likely that she would die during birth rather than moments later. The procedure could hardly be described as an elective abortion; it was a tragedy. We visit our daughter's grave, and we light a candle to her each year. We give thanks that we and our doctors were able to make our own decision without pro-life legislators seeking political gain from our tragedy.

GEORGE STAVIS
Dobbs Ferry, N.Y.

Whenever I read about a politician condemning abortion except in cases of rape and incest, as Rick Santorum does, I'm always curious about who will decide if a woman is eligible for an abortion, given that prosecution and conviction of these crimes is rare. Would Santorum dangle the right to an abortion in front of a rape victim contingent on the conviction of the rapist? What about a fourteen-year-old impregnated by her father? Would Santorum require her to obtain parental consent before allowing her an abortion? Surely I'm not the only one who sees the irony of his position. The refrain is familiar, because it's true: the only way to insure that the women and girls Santorum deems worthy of abortions can obtain them safely and legally is to keep abortion a legal option for all women.

JESSE CARRINGTON
Westwood, N.J.

GILL'S GOOD DEEDS

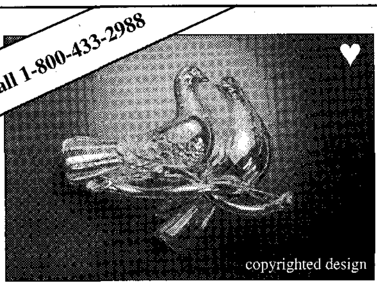
In his January 5th Comment Brendan Gill referred to the work of the Landmarks Preservation Commission in saving the former Friends Meeting House. Although more attention has been paid to the successful preservation of the old Astor Library (now the Joseph Papp Public Theatre), in 1966, saving the Friends Meeting House, in 1967, was also essential, because it took place at a time when the provisions of the landmarks law were being widely challenged. Gill made a valuable contribution to the difficult negotiations that resulted in the preservation of this building, which had been under contract of sale to a builder, and, though he did not seek credit for it, this victory should be added to the list of his achievements.

FRANK B. GILBERT
National Trust for Historic Preservation
Washington, D.C.

Mr. Gill's valedictory Comment reminded me of a paean to cities that he wrote in the catalogue for an exhibit of watercolors of Manhattan: "The buildings, streets, parks, and monuments that we have inherited—and not merely the best of them, mind you, but rather the most characteristic—nourish us from one ordinary day to the next and so become indispensable to our well-being." No one but Gill could portray "mankind's finest achievement" so eloquently.

GAIL PLATT
Pittsburgh, Pa.

Letters should be sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "The Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They can also be faxed to 212-840-8489 or sent via E-mail to themail@newyorker.com. Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and may be published in any medium; we regret that owing to the volume of correspondence we cannot reply to every letter.



Soul Mates

It is a knowing, a certainty from the very first moment. It transcends all logic, all reason, a feeling which emanates from the very depths of being...to be in the presence of our beloved is the greatest joy.

Powerful sentiments of soul bonding and connection are conveyed by our Doves Pin. Exquisite detail. Comes beautifully boxed and gift wrapped. Shown actual size.

Pin, shown, 14K yellow gold

plain	#X122	$395^{00}
diamond eyes	#X123	$465^{00}

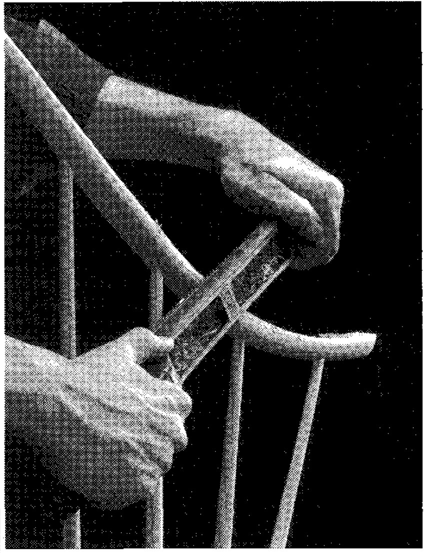
Pendant, 14K yellow gold, 18" chain

plain	#X124	$495^{00}
diamond eyes	#X125	$565^{00}

Absolute Satisfaction Guaranteed

Mail or phone orders M-F 9am - 5pm
Free Second Day Air Shipping
1-800-433-2988

Cross Jewelers
Manufacturing Jewelers Since 1908
570 N Congress St., Portland, ME 04101 ©97



THOS. MOSER
CABINETMAKERS

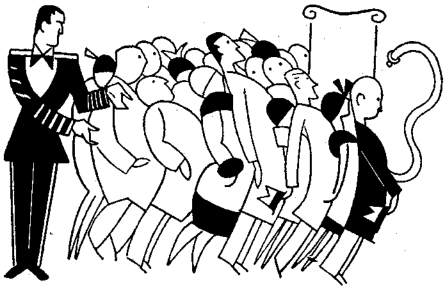
Known for our integrity in construction, simplicity of design and commitment to lasting value.

Call to receive your free catalog.

1-800-708-9703

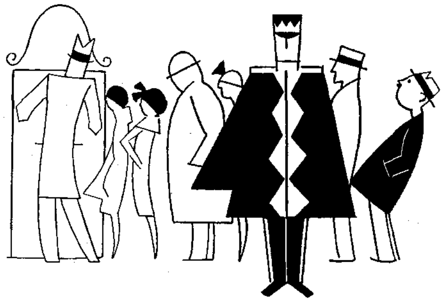
Thos. Moser Cabinetmakers
Auburn, Maine 04211

Portland, Maine - New York, NY - San Francisco
www.thosmoser.com



GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			28	29	30	31
1	2	3				



THE THEATRE

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

The Acting Company—The touring repertory company marks its twenty-fifth anniversary with a staging of "Romeo and Juliet," set in nineteenth-century Italy. In previews Jan. 29-31. Opens Feb. 1 at 7 and continues through Feb. 8. (New Victory, 209 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Black Snow—Keith Reddin's 1993 adaptation of Mikhail Bulgakov's semiautobiographical novel. In previews. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

The Capeman—A musical by Paul Simon and Derek Walcott, based on the life of Salvador Agron, a New York gang member who in 1959, at sixteen, was sentenced to death for murder. Directed and choreographed by Mark Morris. In previews through Jan. 28. Opens Jan. 29 at 6:45. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Eyes for Consuela—Sam Shepard's new play, which stars David Strathairn, is an adaptation of Octavio Paz's 1976 short story "The Blue Bouquet." Terry Kinney is the director. In previews through Feb. 1. Opens Feb. 3 at 7:30. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Freak—John Leguizamo ("Spic-O-Rama") portrays dozens of characters in his new one-man comedy. Directed by David Bar Katz. In previews. (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Gun-Shy—In Richard Dresser's romantic comedy, an ex-couple finds divorce as difficult to maintain as marriage. In previews through Jan. 31. Opens Feb. 1 at 7. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Hedwig and the Angry Inch—John Cameron Mitchell wrote and has the title role in this play, about a German Cold War bride turned rock singer. The band Cheater performs the music, written by Stephen Trask. Previews begin Feb. 1. (Jane Street Theatre, Hotel Riverview Ballroom, 113 Jane St. 239-6200.)

Loot—A Zoo Theatre revival of Joe Orton's 1965 parody of detective plays. Jan. 28-31 at 8. (Dixon Place, 258 Bowery, near Houston St. 219-3088.)

Lypsinka Is Harriet Craig!—In this encore engagement, the drag artistes Lypsinka and Varla Jean Merman join forces in a song-and-dance version of the 1950 Joan Crawford film. Previews begin Jan. 29. (Mother, 432 W. 14th St., at Washington St. 539-7585.)

Mizlansky/Zilinsky; or, Schmucks—Nathan Lane and Lewis J. Stadlen portray two has-been movie producers desperate for a break, in a new comedy by Jon Robin Baitz. Staged by Joe Mantello. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Shopping and Fucking—British playwright Mark Ravenhill's portrait of dissolute youth in London. Max Stafford-Clark and Gemma Bodinetz co-directed. In previews through Feb. 1. Opens Feb. 2 at 8. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 460-5475.)

Theatre for a New Audience—Presenting repertory performances of "Richard II" and "Richard III," starring Steven Skybell and Christopher McCann, respectively. Ron Daniels is the director. In previews. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

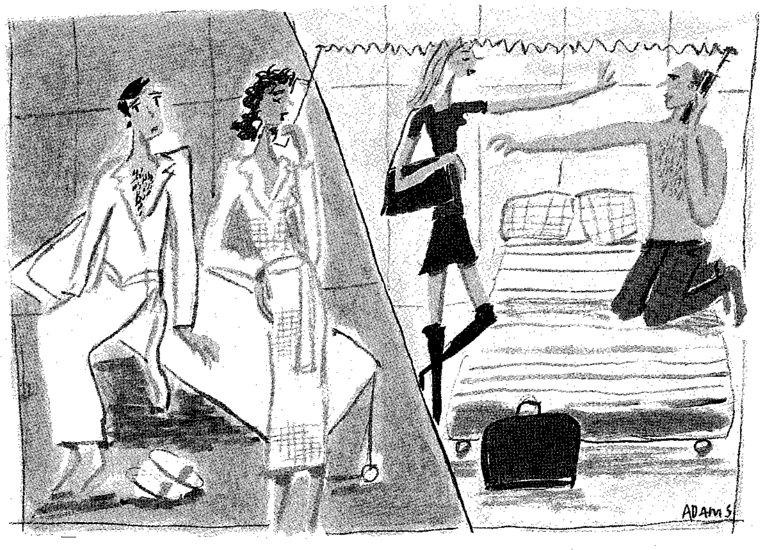
Wang Dang—Tom Noonan stars in his own dark comedy, about a filmmaker past his prime. Previews begin Jan. 29. (Paradise, 64 E. 4th St. 354-2220.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Bashevis: Tales of I. B. Singer—Three of Isaac Bashevis Singer's stories, beguilingly told by the actor David Margulies, whose performance brings fresh life to these wise and funny tales of Jewish intellectuals in Europe and America. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 354-2220.)

Beauty—Steven Patterson's one-man show, inspired by the works of Jean Genet. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556.)

Benita Canova—Richard Foreman's latest concoction is a lush exploration of erotic violence, consisting mainly of a debate between Benita (Joanna P. Adler)—who is, perhaps, the new girl at the bordello—and Madame (David Greenspan), about the nature of sex and the nature of perception. The production piles one powerful image on top of another, from eroticized little girls to the yellow star the Nazis forced Jews to wear. The combinations can be overwhelming, but they're never over the top—the effect is like being drawn into someone's secret dreams. A memorable, perceptive, and voyeuristic experience. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 533-4650.)



Richard Dresser's "Gun-Shy," at Playwrights Horizons.

BETH ADAMS

Black Humor—Topical comedy, written and performed by the political satirist Lewis Black. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

The Country Wife—Wycherley's Restoration comedy, presented by the Westside Repertory Theatre. Alex Roe is the director. (252 W. 81st St. 874-7290. Closes Feb. 15.)

The Diary of Anne Frank—Theatrically, this revival of the 1955 play by Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett, which aims for realism and historical scrupulousness, is an improvement over the original, and the cast, under the direction of James Lapine, is generally fine. But the play's realism is also its fundamental flaw. Accuracy is not a substitute for truth—and one of the truths we take away from Anne's diary is that we *can't* know what it was like. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/15/97.) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

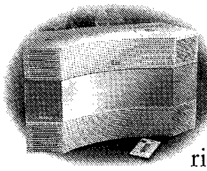
The Field of Mars—A production inspired by Tacitus, in which the audience wanders through the set as the action progresses. Staged by Gale Gates et al. (37 Main St., Brooklyn. 718-522-4597.)

Goose-Pimples—Under the clear-eyed direction of Scott Elliott, the New Group brings a near-excruciating realism to Mike Leigh's bleakly comic 1981 portrayal of the cruelty disappointment can inspire. At the end of the play's two and a half hours—it takes place virtually in real time—you'll feel lucky to have lived through it. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

I Can't Remember Anything/The Last Yankee—The Signature Theatre Company's Arthur Miller season continues, with two slight one-acts. The first is a very funny look at old age, charmingly acted by Joseph Wiseman and Rebecca Schull; there's something poignant lurking, but the script seems to keep heading the actors off. The second, too, has its funny turns (particularly the ones involving Peter Maloney), but it's basically a rant against materialism and not being nice. A breathtaking moment when Shami Chaikin, as a depressed woman, suddenly comes out of her shell, tap-dancing, provides the only bit of depth—and, again, the actress didn't find it in the script. Joseph Chaikin's direction and E. David Cosier's sets are both marvellous. (555 W. 42nd St. 244-7529. Closes Feb. 8.)

I'm Still Here . . . Damn It!—A mean little cocktail from Sandra Bernhard, composed of equal parts stand-up, performance art, cabaret, world-weariness, and dish, deliv-

EXPERIENCE THE *allure* OF THE *award-winning* BOSE® ACOUSTIC WAVE® MUSIC SYSTEM.

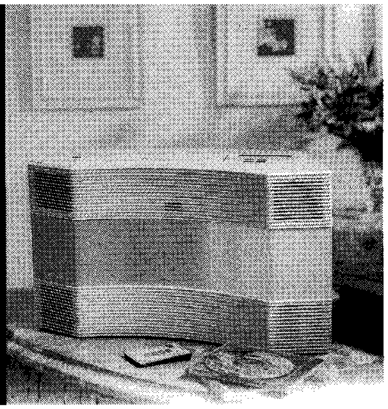


One look at the Acoustic Wave® music system and it's easy to see why, when it was first introduced, the *Chicago Tribune* called the system "the least intimidating quality sound system ever developed." Gone are the tangle of wires and various components common to most stereos. Absent, too, are the abundance of buttons, knobs, and complicated controls. In fact, all you have to do to start experiencing rich, full sound is plug the system in and press "On."

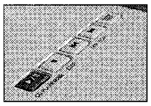
The Acoustic Wave music system is a complete stereo system that measures just 10.5″H × 18″W × 6.5″D, yet contains a CD player, AM/FM radio, and three built-in Bose speakers. There's even an appealing credit card-sized remote control.

The Bose Acoustic Wave® music system.

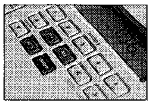
WE NOT ONLY MADE IT *easy to use*, WE MADE IT *hard to resist.*



It's also easy to bring Bose quality sound to your favorite programs—simply connect the system to your TV or VCR. The secret to such lifelike sound is our patented acoustic waveguide technology. Just as a flute strengthens a breath of air to fill an entire concert hall, the waveguide produces room-filling sound from a small enclosure. The result is sound comparable to larger, more expensive stereo systems.

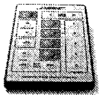


Simple CD controls let you scan, skip, or choose random tracks.



Preset five AM and five FM stations.

IT'S EVEN EASY TO REACH US. CALL 1-800-897-BOSE, *anytime,* DAY OR NIGHT.



Handy credit card-sized remote control.

The system is available directly from Bose, the most respected name in sound. For a free information kit, including details about our 30-day in-home trial and satisfaction guarantee, simply give us a call. Or complete and mail the coupon below. And then get ready to hear the stereo that redefines *easy* listening.

ORDER BY MARCH 20, 1998, FOR FREE SHIPPING.

TO RECEIVE YOUR *free* INFORMATION KIT
CALL TODAY 1-800-897-BOSE, EXT. A2753.

Mr./Mrs./Ms.
Name (Please Print) Telephone ( )
Address
City State Zip

Mail to: Bose Corporation, Dept. CDD-A2753, The Mountain, Framingham, MA 01701-9168, or fax to 1-800-862-BOSE (1-800-862-2673).
Ask about FedEx® delivery service.

BOSE®
Better sound through research®

©1998 Bose Corporation. Covered by patent rights issued and/or pending. Free shipping offer not to be combined with any other offer or applied to previous purchases. FedEx service marks used by permission. Quote: Rich Warren, *Chicago Tribune*, 12/84.

ered from her spike-heeled perch. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 307-7171. Closes Feb. 15.)

Jackie—A complete delight. The playwright, Gip Hoppe, may be satirizing what we think we know about the former First Lady (Margaret Colin), but he does it with such heart and high comedy that you may not want to leave the theatre. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Joseph Gabriel Magic '98—Mr. Gabriel comes to New York by way of Las Vegas. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

June Moon—Ring Lardner and George S. Kaufman's 1929 comedy, set in the world of Tin Pan Alley, is a loving satire of show-biz and musical-comedy conventions, and it has been given an appropriately loving revival under the direction of Mark Nelson. But, although the production hits the right tone, it holds that tone too long—twenty minutes' worth of cuts would transform it from a pleasure into a delight. The good cast includes Justin Kirk, Jessica Stone, Albert Macklin (who, in an Oscar Levant-ish role, *is* a delight), Robert Joy, and Cynthia Nixon. (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

The Last Session—A musical by Steve Schalchlin (music and lyrics) and Jim Brochu (book), about an AIDS-afflicted songwriter's final studio work. (47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

Life's Loss's Loved—Kirk Wood Bromley and Aaron Beall's contemporary sequel to "Love's Labour's Lost." (Nada, 167 Ludlow St. 420-1466. Closes Feb. 1.)

The Lion King—The director Julie Taymor has created a theatrical event far more textured and original than the animated film, submerging the audience in a mythic universe; it's like being in a dream awake. The show's high visual style, however, is in sharp contrast to its low verbal one. Garth Fagan is the choreographer. (11/24/97) (New Amsterdam, 214 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

Marc Salem's Mindgames—The mentalist claims that his highly entertaining mind-reading act is both hocus-pocus-free and scam-free. Still, his fascinating "tricks" seem like magic, and the fun comes from trying to figure out how in the world he does them. At times you feel like you're the only person in the audience who isn't a plant. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200.)

Never the Sinner—John Logan's 1985 play about Leopold and Loeb, the teen-age millionaires who murdered a child in Chicago in 1924, sweeps its audience into the boys' friendship without ever losing sight of the brutal murder—a balancing act that Mr. Logan and the director, Ethan McSweeny, carry off seamlessly. Jason Patrick Bowcutt and Michael Solomon are utterly convincing as the killers. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

The Old Neighborhood—David Mamet's three elegant, autobiographical one-act plays full of laughter and lament. Serious, beautiful, and short: an almost impossible feat these days on Broadway. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

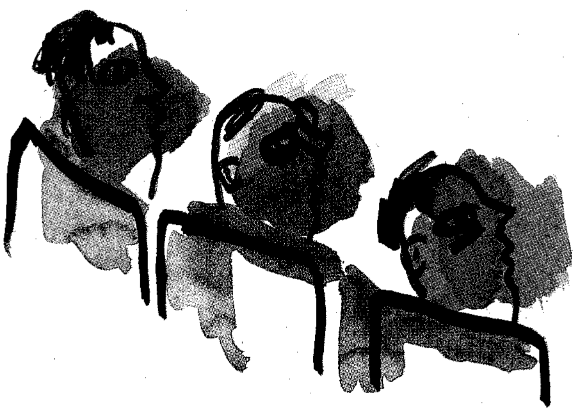
Phaedra in Delirium—Susan Yankowitz's contemporary take on Euripides, co-staged by Classic Stage Company and Women's Project & Productions. Kathleen Chalfant and Peter Jay Fernandez star. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes Feb. 15.)

Pride's Crossing—Tina Howe's new play is a tedious switchback ride up a mountain of memories from the life of Mabel Tidings Bigelow, who is ninety and once swam the English Channel. Howe makes the fatal mistake of confusing illustrative incident with dramatic action. Fortunately, Mabel is portrayed by Cherry Jones, who polishes all the tics, fumbles, and feisty outbursts of a nonagenarian to a high shine. Jack O'Brien directed. (1/5/98) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Ragtime—Terrence McNally (book) and Stephen Flaherty and Lynn Ahrens (score) have adapted E. L. Doctorow's 1975 novel for the musical stage. Frank Galati is the director. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Ford Center for the Performing Arts, 213 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

R & J—Four students at a boys' boarding school mount a production of "Romeo and Juliet," in this adaptation by Joe Calarco. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 354-2220.)

Ricky Jay & His 52 Assistants—The sleight-of-hand artist returns to the stage with an encore production of his 1994 one-man show. Directed by David Mamet. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 787-3471.)



KAREN CALDICOTT

The Scarlet Pimpernel—This new musical, based on the Baroness Orczy novel, has a lot going for it (if you don't count its music and lyrics, which are dreadful and appalling, respectively): its charismatic star, Douglas Sills, Andrew Jackness's sets, and Jane Greenwood's costumes. Peter Hunt directed. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Scotland Road—In Jeffrey Hatcher's mystery, a woman rescued from an iceberg in the North Atlantic claims to be a survivor of the Titanic disaster. Melia Bensussen is the director. (Primary Stages, 354 W. 45th St. 333-4052. Closes Feb. 15.)

Secrets Every Smart Traveler Should Know—A comic revue inspired by the Fodor's handbook of the same title. (Triad, 158 W. 72nd St. 799-4599.)

1776—Scott Ellis's lean, lively production of Sherman Edwards and Peter Stone's still fresh 1969 musical about the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. (9/8/97) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

The Show Goes On—A compendium of songs by two seventyish musical-theatre pros, the lyricist-librettist Tom Jones and the composer Harvey Schmidt. For once, they're the stars of their own show; Schmidt plays the piano and Jones provides a charming review of their forty-year partnership, which has been responsible for such musicals as "110 in the Shade," "I Do! I Do!," and that longest of long runs, "The Fantasticks." Three talented singers lend a hand: Jo Ann Cunningham, J. Mark McVey, and, in a promising New York début, Emma Lampert. Directed, with a sense of fun, by Drew Scott Harris, under the auspices of the York Theatre Company. (Theatre at St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 935-5820.)

Song at Sunset—A one-man show about the playwright Sean O'Casey, written and directed by his daughter, Shivaun, and performed by the Irish actor Niall Buggy. (Irish Repertory Theatre, 132 W. 22nd St. 727-2737. Closes Feb. 15.)

Street Corner Symphony—A revue of some thirty songs, mostly from the sixties and seventies, conceived, choreographed, and staged by Marion J. Caffey. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100. Closes Feb. 1.)

The Sunshine Boys—A revival of Neil Simon's comedy about two irascible old vaudevillians, starring Ye Olde Odd Couple of television, Tony Randall and Jack Klugman. While there are some very funny lines, the production is somehow lacking in chemistry. The sandpapery friction that the twosome created so successfully on TV isn't much in evidence—they seem reduced to lovability. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Two Pianos, Four Hands—With the Canadian keyboardists Ted Dykstra and Richard Greenblatt. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

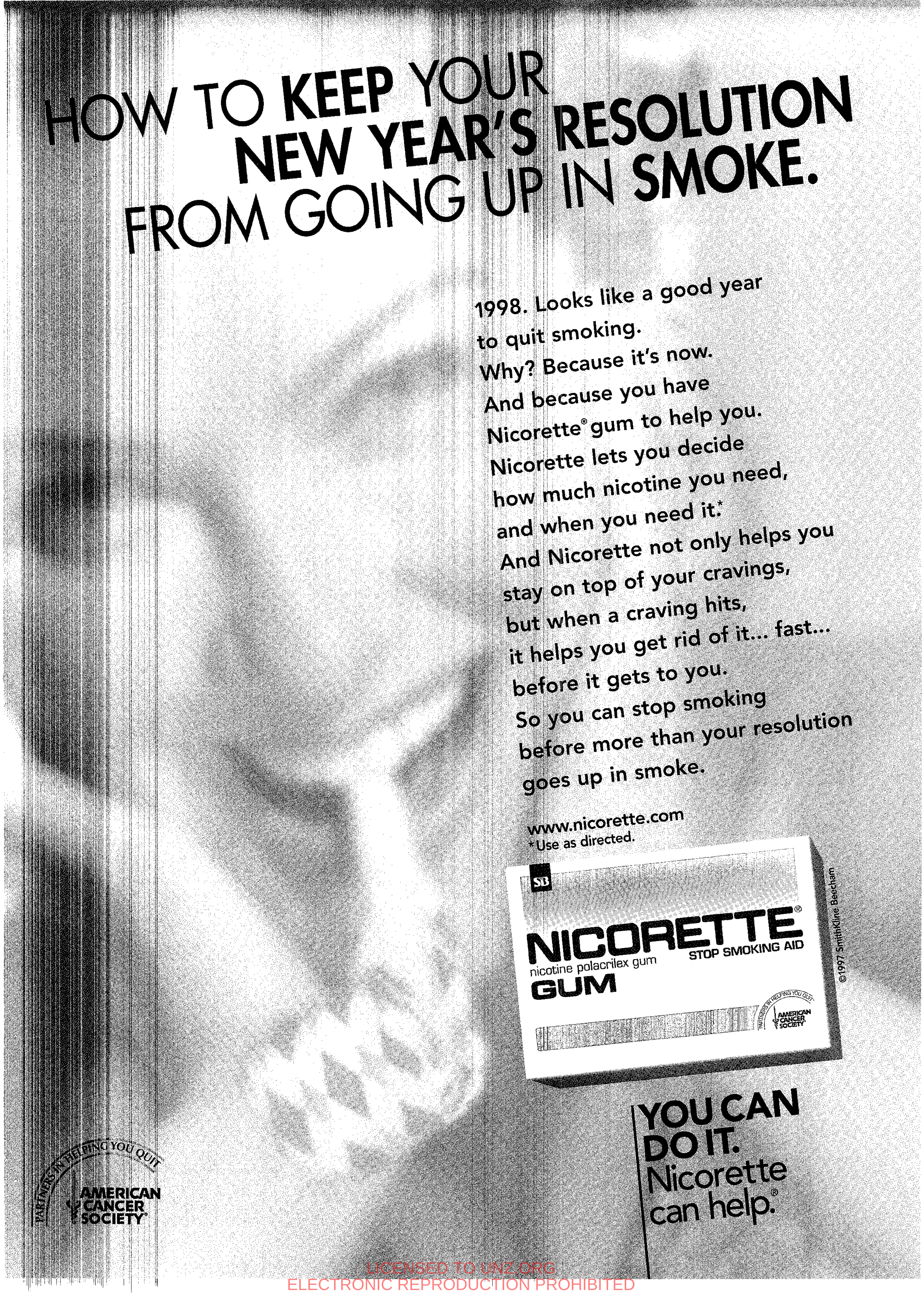
Underground Goddess—Abigail Gampel's one-woman show, which she describes as "a raw, Ann-Margret-style theatre event . . . with lots of song styles, a bit of dance, and a great gown." (Nuyorican Poets Café, 236 E. 3rd St. 505-8183. Closes Jan. 31.)

A View from the Bridge—Despite its cool reception in 1955, Arthur Miller's tragic story of the longshoreman Eddie Carbone and his obsession with his orphaned niece proves, in this Roundabout Theatre revival, a potent and durable American fable. Under the skillful direction of Michael Mayer, Anthony LaPaglia gives Eddie a brooding, exciting presence, and Brittany Murphy, as his niece, captures every nuance of her character's child-woman appeal. The expert cast also includes Allison Janney, as Eddie's frazzled wife. (1/5/98) (Broadway at 45th St. 719-1300. Closes Feb. 22.)

Visiting Mr. Green—Jeff Baron's sweet if predictable Upper West Side comedy, about two Jewish men of different generations. Eli Wallach, in a masterly performance, finds great dignity in the title character, an eighty-six-year-old widower forced to endure the company of a young corporate executive (David Alan Basche) who has been sentenced to six months of community service with him. Who helps whom is, of course, part of the point. Lonny Price directed. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 505-0700.)

LONG RUNS

AS BEES IN HONEY DROWN: Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200. . . . **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **BRING IN DA NOISE, BRING IN DA FUNK:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CHICAGO:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY STRIKES BACK!:** Stardust, Broadway at 51st St. 239-6200. . . . **FOREVER TANGO:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200. . . . **GRANDMA SYLVIA'S FUNERAL:** SoHo Playhouse, 15 Vandam St. 691-1555. . . . **GROSS INDECENCY: THE THREE TRIALS OF OSCAR WILDE:** Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000. . . . **HOWARD CRABTREE'S WHEN PIGS FLY:** Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **HOW I LEARNED TO DRIVE:** Century, 111 E. 15th St. 239-6200. . . . **I LOVE YOU, YOU'RE PERFECT, NOW CHANGE:** Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 239-6200. . . . **JEKYLL & HYDE:** Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE KING AND I:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 307-4100. . . . **THE LAST NIGHT OF BALLYHOO:** Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100. . . . **LATE NITE CATECHISM:** St. Luke's Church, 308 W. 46th St. 279-4200. . . . **THE LIFE:** Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **RENT:** Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 921-8000. . . . **SMOKEY JOE'S CAFÉ:** Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at St. Marks Pl. 477-2477. . . . **TITANIC:** Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 239-6200.



HOW TO **KEEP** YOUR **NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION** FROM GOING UP IN **SMOKE.**

1998. Looks like a good year to quit smoking. Why? Because it's now. And because you have Nicorette® gum to help you. Nicorette lets you decide how much nicotine you need, and when you need it.* And Nicorette not only helps you stay on top of your cravings, but when a craving hits, it helps you get rid of it... fast... before it gets to you. So you can stop smoking before more than your resolution goes up in smoke.

www.nicorette.com

*Use as directed.

SB
NICORETTE®
STOP SMOKING AID
nicotine polacrilex gum
GUM
PARTNERS IN HELPING YOU QUIT
AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

YOU CAN DO IT. Nicorette can help.®

PARTNERS IN HELPING YOU QUIT
AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY®

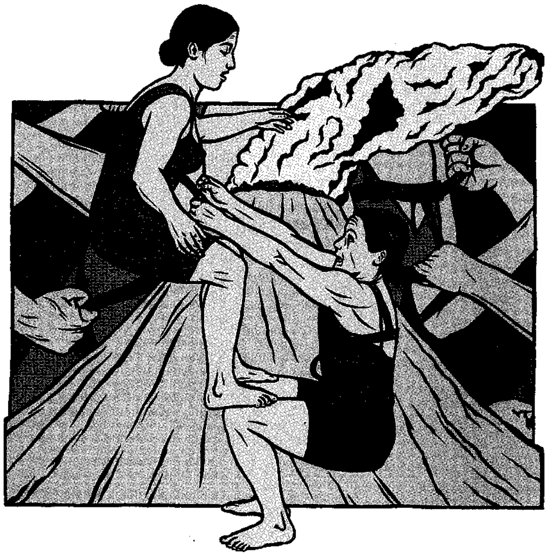
©1997 SmithKline Beecham

DANCE

New York City Ballet—Jan. 28 at 8: "Mozartiana," "Variations on a Nursery Song," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." . . . ¶ Jan. 29 at 8: "Square Dance," "Slavonic Dances," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: "Concerti Armonici," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Stravinsky Violin Concerto." . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 2: "Mozartiana," "Variations on a Nursery Song," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 8: "Square Dance," "Sonatas and Interludes," "Zakouski," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 3: "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Dances at a Gathering," and "Brandenburg." . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 8: "Firebird," "Sonatas and Interludes," "Zakouski," and "Tchaikovsky Suite No. 3." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. Through March 1.)

Ballet Nacional de Cuba—The Havana-based troupe, under the direction of the erstwhile A.B.T. soloist Alicia Alonso, returns to New York for the first time in two decades with its version of "Cinderella," set not to Prokofiev but to the three-quarter-time strains of Johann Strauss, Jr. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Jan. 27-30 at 8, Jan. 31 at 2 and 8, and Feb. 1 at 3.)

Washington Ballet—The capital-city company presents a program of international choreography, including "Savannah," by Ntsikelelo Cekwana, of South Africa, "Double Contrasts," by Choo-San Goh, of Singapore, and "Sync," by Nils Christe, of the Netherlands. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Jan. 27-31 at 8 and Feb. 1 at 2 and 7:30.)



Tanya Gagne and Sarah East Johnson grapple with the elements, in "Groundwork," at P.S. 122.

MICHAEL KUPPERMAN

"Groundwork"—While Sarah East Johnson and her four-woman troupe wait for a high-ceilinged venue that can handle their recently acquired aerial skills (static and flying trapeze, both solo and partnered), they show off their terrestrial tricks in the intimate confines of P.S. 122: hoop diving, handstands, group pyramids, Greco-Roman and Wrestlemania-style wrestling. The gym-rat choreography balances sweat with triumph: Johnson likes her audience to hear the agony and see the thrill. "I went to Mount St. Helens this past summer," she says. "I looked at the life coming back, the forest rebuilding. You could see the destructive force bringing out a rich soil. That's what I try to do: what gets in your way can take you someplace new." (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Jan. 29-Feb. 1 at 8:30.)

"Double Meaning"—Allison Green, from New York City, and Dominique Porte, from Montreal, collaborate on the title duet, with running commentary from both dancers in French and English. The program includes Porte's "Déviation" and the première of Green's "On." (Danspace Project, St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at 8:30.)

Carnival—Dance Theatre Workshop continues its choreographers' showcase. Jan. 27-28 at 8: **ELLIS WOOD**. . . . ¶ Jan. 29-30 at 8: **KEELY GARFIELD**. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 8 and Feb. 1 at 3: **BETH COINER**. (219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Through March 22.)

Joyce Trisler Dance Company—The troupe has been out of commission for several years, but following the death of its last surviving founder, Harry Rubenstein, longtime member Regina Larkin has put it back together again. The eight-member company appears in works by Trisler and Larkin. (Joyce SoHo, 155 Mercer St. 334-7479. Jan. 30-Feb. 1 at 8.)

"Dancing the Self: The Solo Art Form"—Five performers (Kathy Westwater, Laura Staton, Amy Kail, Terry Hollis, and Marc Kennison) present new solos and entertain questions afterward. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5552. Feb. 1 at 3.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Dizzy Gillespie Tribute Concert—In lieu of turning his birthday into a national holiday, the least anyone can do is present an annual concert in honor of John Birks Gillespie, a man who has become synonymous with modern jazz trumpet. Two strong brassmen—Jon Faddis and Nicholas Payton—play alongside pianist Mike Longo, bassist David Williams, and drummer Winard Harper. (Abrons Art Center, Henry Street Settlement, 466 Grand St. 598-0400. Jan. 28 at 7.)

Ted Nash Double Quartet Plus One / Andy Laster Ensemble—The adventurous saxophonists, composers, and bandleaders Nash and Laster leave the veneration of the tradition to others and get on with the business of extending its formal and expressive concerns. Tough work, but somebody's got to do it. (New School's Jazz Performance Space, 55 W. 13th St. Tickets at the door. Jan. 29 at 8.)

Billy Joel—He's never mythologized New York the way Bruce Springsteen turned New Jersey into his own Yoknapatawpha County, but Joel has always been a hometown boy. His multi-night local gigs have a prodigal-son intensity. (Nassau Coliseum. 516-794-9300. Jan. 29 and Feb. 2 at 8.)

"Puttin' on the Ritz: The Irving Berlin Songbook"—Vocalist Carol Lawrence and four supporting singers wend their way through more than forty Berlin tunes. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. Jan. 29-31 at 8 and Feb. 1 at 3.)

Matt Wilson Quartet—Wilson vies with Leon Parker as one of the most musical young drummers on the scene today. His "As Wave Follows Wave" was one of last year's more intriguing recordings; close attention should be paid to his bounding growth. (Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. 708-9491. Jan. 30 at 5:30.)

Hawaiian Slack-Key-Guitar Festival—Unbeknownst to Clint Eastwood, perhaps, there have been cowboys in Hawaii since the early eighteen-hundreds. And, like their North American brothers, they have their own brand of guitar playing: slack key, wherein the strings are tuned down to a low and moaning open chord that makes the instrument snap, buzz, and gurgle like a Jew's harp in an empty saloon. For this somewhat bizarre and potentially beautiful evening, the indefatigable World Music Institute has brought together three experts (each of whom appears on Dancing Cat Records' excellent "Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar Masters"), along with the Ku'ulei Aloha Dancers, a three-member hula troupe. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Jan. 30 at 8.)

Tziganka—The London-based Russian folk ensemble. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Jan. 30 at 8.)

Sisters of Mercy—The long-defunct Goth combo returns with a flourish of black eyeliner and gloomy New Wave dance tunes. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Jan. 30 at 8.)

"WKTU Saturday Night Fever 20th-Anniversary Celebration"—Featuring the Bee Gees, K.C. & the Sunshine Band, Yvonne Elliman, Kool & the Gang, the Trammps, Tavares, and Deney Terio. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Jan. 31 at 8.)

Mayte Martín and Belén Maya—The flamenco singer and dancer. (Symphony Space. Jan. 31 at 8 and Feb. 1 at 3.)

"Doin' What Comes Natur'lly"—A benefit tribute to Ethel Merman, starring Patti LuPone, Lainie Kazan, Andrea Martin, Elaine Stritch, and Bette Midler. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 367-1111. Feb. 1 at 7.)

"Jazz at Merkin Hall"—There'll be something old, new, borrowed, and blue when bassist Ron Carter, pianists Renee Rosnes and James Williams, saxophonist Greg Osby, trumpeter Miles Griffith, and vocalist Etta Jones take the stage at this intimate hall. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 501-3330. Feb. 2 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is always advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. (581-3080)—Jan. 28-29: By now, **LARRY CORYELL'S** flat-footed fusion work has been, one hopes, forgiven and forgotten. Always a serious player even when his taste faltered, this gifted guitarist is still finding plenty to say whether amplified or unplugged. Jan. 30-31: The **NEW YORK VOICES** sing the songs of Paul Simon. Feb. 1: The **CHICO O'FARRILL AFRO-CUBAN JAZZ ORCHESTRA**. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through Jan. 29: The **JIMMY SMITH** quartet and the **BROTHER JACK MCDUFF** quintet. The wave of Hammond organists which has followed Smith has yet to swamp him: no one can make the instrument purr and scream quite like he can. He's a sophisticated funkster who can turn a concert hall into a roadhouse and a club into a temple of the blues. McDuff came of age in an era when a jazz organist needed two things: a Hammond B3 and a hip moniker (cf. Big John Patton, Groove Holmes, and Baby Face Willette, for starters.) His devotion to his instrument and the soulful bop that oozes from it make you glad he's around to see the current funky-organ revival. On Jan. 30-Feb. 2, two more children of Jimmy Smith come in. Organist **JIMMY MCGRIFF** has been chasing the blues away with his partner, the legendary R. & B. altoist **HANK CRAWFORD**, for the better part of the nineties; **CHARLES EARLAND** is also making the most of the current fascination with the electric organ and parading his still limber chops. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound pastel murals, and, through March 7, the amazing **EARTHA KITT**.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Through Feb. 1: **JAMES MOODY**, a twisted sax and flute virtuoso with unblemished bop credentials, who spikes his dense harmonic excursions with right-side-of-the-brain humor. Mondays belong to electric-guitar innovator **LES PAUL**. Dining.

Jazz Standard, 116 E. 27th St. (576-2232)—A new jazz establishment features some new jazz hopefuls. Through Feb. 1: **RON AFFIF**, a young guitarist with flying fingers and a heart filled with bebop, brings in his trio.

Lenox Lounge, 288 Lenox Ave., between 124th and 125th Sts. (427-0253)—This Harlem club brings first-rate jazz back north with a vengeance. Jan. 30-31: The **CECIL BROOKS III** quartet. A solid drummer with four decades of experience under his belt, Brooks can stir a rhythmic tremor under the feet of any like-minded professional who stands up beside him.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A plush, old-fashioned night club, sixty-five floors above it all, complete with Art Deco fixtures, intimate glitter, and a panoramic view as dizzying as the tab. Through Feb. 7: Guitarist and vocalist **JOHN PIZZARELLI,** an agile musician and a pleasant low-key crooner from the Chet Baker/Alfalfa school. He's solidly backed by his brother, Martin, on bass, and Ray Kennedy on piano, making this the best-sounding cabaret act in town.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features up-and-coming players jamming late into the night. Jan. 29: The sure and skillful bassist **DWAYNE BURNO** has played with enough heavyweights to have amassed sufficient tips about leading his own band. The **JASON LINDNER BIG BAND** holds court every Monday; the **LARRY GOLDINGS** trio has Tuesdays; and the **SAM YAHEL ORGAN QUARTET** is in each Wednesday.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A convivial and crowded jazz club where the musicians are always top-shelf. Through Feb. 1: The **JOHN HICKS** trio/quintet. Intense, inventive, and garrulous, pianist Hicks combines the harmonic daring and aggression of McCoy Tyner with the romantic fluency of Roland Hanna—not a bad mix. He's supported throughout by drummer Idris Muhammed and bassist Curtis Lundy, while select hornmen join the trio on Jan. 30-Feb. 1. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The **FRED HERSCH** trio is in through Feb. 1. The agile and lyrical pianist is a dyed-in-the-wool romantic, but his bittersweet poetry is cloaked in historical knowledge (he's been hip to the glories of Billy Strayhorn for years) and formal strength. Amazingly for someone so long on the scene (he's worked with everyone from Jane Ira Bloom to Joe Henderson to Toots Thielemans), this is only his second Vanguard engagement as a leader. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. Through Jan. 31: The **VALTIHNO BRAZILIAN JAZZ QUARTET.**

ROCK, ETC.

Arlene Grocery, 95 Stanton St., between Ludlow and Orchard Sts. (358-1633)—A narrow, dimly lit renovated bodega that's the perfect generic environment for three to five unknown bands each night trying to escape obscurity. Jan. 28: Excellent downtown rock and funk with **FONTAINE.** Jan. 31: Irish singer-songwriter **MEHUMAN JONSON.**

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Jan. 28: **VICTORIA WILLIAMS.** Even those who have trouble with this Louisiana-bred folksinger's voice—a high, mildly cloying, Kewpie-doll instrument—have been charmed by her uncanny talent for songwriting. Last year she released her fourth full-length album, a splendid collection titled "Musings of a Creek Dipper." She has also been waging a graceful battle against multiple sclerosis and has become a solid campaigner for a health-insurance system for musicians. Jan. 30: **BUSTER POINDEXTER AND HIS SPANISH ROCKETSHIP BAND.** Jan. 31: **AL KOOPER,** the veteran producer and organist (most famously on Dylan's "Highway 61 Revisited"), entertains the troops.

Chicago B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Jan. 30: **CAREY BELL,** an accomplished disciple of harmonica masters Little Walter (Jacobs) and Big Walter Horton. Jan. 31: Composer and singer **EARL KING,** who was one of the major shapers of New Orleans R. & B. in the fifties and sixties.

"Topiary, Staten Island, 1995," by Richard Rothman (see Photography).

Fez, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—Feb. 1: The **SUN RA ARKESTRA.** The maestro has returned to Saturn, but his band plays on under the skillful direction of veteran saxophonist Marshall Allen. The unexpected is still to be expected. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—Jan. 29: **YOSSI PIAMENTA,** the guitarist lovingly known in these parts as the Hasidic Hendrix.

Mercury Lounge, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—A medium-sized, brick-walled haven of a back room where, no matter who's onstage, the listening is a pleasure. Jan. 28: Hard-hitting garage punk with the **FRIGGS.**

Les Poulets, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and the occasional cha-cha. Dining.

Rodeo Bar, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—The walls simulate a log cabin, a buffalo head blows smoke through its nostrils, a horse trailer has been converted into a bar. It's just about the best free house in town. Jan. 29: **FIVE CHINESE BROTHERS** formed more than a decade ago at Columbia University (as the Special Guests) and have since become local heroes and one of smart pop's great journeymen acts. Think Squeeze or Crowded House, only louder, looser, bluesier—more American.

Tramps, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Jan. 30: **IVY,** a low-key power-pop outfit featuring Adam Schlesinger, of the equally appealing Fountains of Wayne. Jan. 31: **TOSHI REAGON AND BIG LOVELY.** The fierce and uncompromising singer Reagon once turned down a major record deal because the suits wanted to reshape her image; now she releases her records herself. Her shows are celebratory—a shower of retro funk, urban blues, and folk—and they're all sung with evangelical fervor. To hear her is to believe. Feb. 1: The slowcore splendor of Brooklyn's **REX.**

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Jan. 30: New York City and Boston ska from, respectively, **METRO STYLEE** and **BIM SKALA BIM.**

ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (879-5500)—"Flowers Underfoot: Indian Carpets of the Mughal Era." A sumptuous collection of rare Indian carpets from the late sixteenth century (when the Mughal emperor Akbar founded the first imperial carpet workshops) through the eighteenth. The finest were made from pashmina, the underfleece of the Himalayan mountain goat, on silk foundations, and there is a stunning example here from around 1630, during the reign of Shah Jahan, when the flower style dominated: a shimmering niche carpet in exquisite dyes—pink, sand, ivory, celadon, mandarin, garnet—with a leafy, blooming poppy plant flanked by a pair of tulips in the center. With about two thousand knots per square inch, it's breathtaking. Through March 1. . . . ¶ An exhibition at the Costume Institute devoted to the work of Gianni Versace. Through March 22. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—"New Video from Great Britain," a two-hour compilation of short works, each from one to eighteen minutes long, by Gillian Wearing, Ed Lipski, Sam Taylor-Wood, and others. On a continuous loop, through Feb. 1. . . . ¶ "Deadpan," Steve McQueen's aptly titled four-minute silent film inspired by a famous Buster Keaton sight gag. Through Feb. 10. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, and Thursdays, 10:30 to 6; Fridays, 10:30 to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (423-3500)—"After 'Mountains and Sea': Frankenthaler 1956-59" gathers large-scale works in the thin-paint style of the artist's 1952 masterwork. Through May 3. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—"Arthur Dove: A Retrospective," the first major exhibition in more than twenty years to examine the work of the Empire State abstractionist, who lived in a string of rustic accommodations—a farm, a houseboat, the custodian's quarters of a yacht club, an abandoned post office by a tidal pond—while fashioning palpitant, nonfigurative works reflecting his preoccupation with the natural world. (See also Galleries—Uptown, Short List.) Through April 12. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St. (769-5100)—"The Nature of Diamonds" looks at many facets of the adamantine stone, from its birth in volcanic fissures to its eventual rise to the heads of heads of state (e.g., on the crown of Peter the Great, displayed in the exhibition's walk-in diamond vault). Through April 26. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

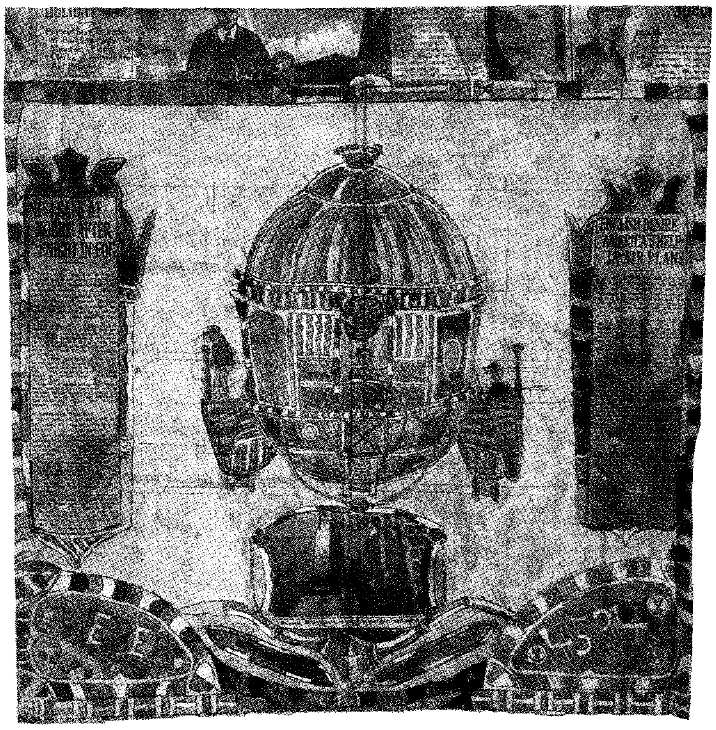
Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway (718-638-5000)—"The Furniture of George Hunzinger: Invention and Innovation in Nineteenth-Century America." Settees, daybeds, plant stands, stationary rockers, and a multitude of other chairs, by one of America's preëminent Victorian furniture makers. His constructions reflect the period's gluttonous appetite for the Gothic and the Baroque, as well as the aesthetics of his native southern Germany: there is a kind of Wagnerian madness to much of his work, but its unabashed eccentricity is precisely its appeal. Through Feb. 15. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays, 11 to 9; and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St. (956-3535)—"Expressions in Wood: Masterwork from the Wornick Collection." Objects fashioned from such native woods as yellow birch and box elder and from more exotic ones (the guatambu, which grows in Brazil), lovingly shaped with the help of chain saws, band saws, lathes, and so on. Through March 22. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Ave. at 27th St. (217-5800)—"Toledo/Toledo: A Marriage of Art and Fashion" presents the work of the artist-and-couturier team of Ruben and Isabel Toledo. The husband renders the designs his wife comes up with and manages her business, and she serves as the muse for his fashion illustrations; the exhibition contains examples of both her clothing and his art. Through April 25. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, noon to 8; Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave., at 104th St. (534-1672)—"Bridging New York" brings together paintings, vintage postcards, vertiginous photographs, and daredevil films documenting the two thousand bridges that span the city's roads and waterways. Through June 21. (Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. (869-8089)—"Subject Matters: Photography, Romana Javitz, and the New York Public Library" catalogues the librarian's contributions to the Picture Collection, the invaluable archive she curated during its expansionary heyday, from 1929 to 1968. The exhibition includes a range of documentary photographs and examples of call slips with pictures drawn by patrons to identify images they were searching for. Through March 28. (Open Mondays, and Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6; Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6.)



The aeronautical notebooks of Charles A. A. Dellschau (Ricco/Maresca).

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Gustave Courbet (1819-77) / **"Mostly Skies"**—Later paintings, most of them dazzling, willful seascapes and rich, voluptuous landscapes (dense, shaded glades with streams and waterfalls and ponds; chalky gray gorges and grottoes; velvety emerald hillsides and meadows). Toward the end of his life, Courbet returned to the landscape of his youth, the Loue Valley in the Jura Mountains, and his superb paintings "Château d'Ornans" and "Gorge in the Jura" suggest the magical way place can capture a child's imagination and never give way. Through Feb. 28. / A charming, demure collection of small paintings by Corot, Blakelock, Rousseau, Constable, and Huet, and three tiny, beautiful pigment prints by Sudek, in all of which conditions in the troposphere predominate. Through Jan. 31. (Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. 879-6606. Open Mondays.)

Eric Fischl—The artist's first exhibition devoted exclusively to sculpture: eight medium-sized bronzes, all nudes (both male and female), most of them engaged in solipsistic acts or emotional upheavals that seem intended to underscore our own sorry disengagement from the universe, from one another, and perhaps even from ourselves. But the emotionalism rings hollow; there's an unsettling emptiness to these pieces which may or may not be what the artist intended. Through Feb. 28. (Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. 744-2313.)

Short List—**herbert brown,** Gat, 1100 Madison Ave., at 82nd St. 327-0441. Through Feb. 28. . . . **arthur dove,** Dintenfass, 20 E. 79th St. 581-2268. Through Feb. 28. . . . **george grosz and philip evergood,** Forum, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 355-4545. Through Feb. 21. . . . **ralph humphrey,** Danese, 41 E. 57th St. 223-2227. Through Feb. 14. . . . **kazuko inoue** and **jerry mc laughlin,** Stone, 113 E. 90th St. 988-6870. Both shows through Feb. 28. . . . **wes mills,** Helman, 20 W. 57th St. 245-2888. Through Feb. 21. . . . **catherine redmond,** MB Modern, 41 E. 57th St. 371-3444. Through Jan. 31. . . . **george tooker and debra bermingham,** DC Moore, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 247-2111. Through Feb. 7. . . . **helen torr,** Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. 535-5767. Through Feb. 21. . . . **john walker,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. 794-0550. Through Feb. 7.

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Charles A. A. Dellschau (1830-1923)—A Prussian immigrant who settled in Houston in 1850, Dellschau worked as a butcher and then as a sales clerk until he retired, in 1900. He spent the rest of his days cloistered in his attic, painting and drawing obsessively in what he called "aeronautical notebooks." Each one contains dozens of pages of fantastical airships—brightly colored flying machines with flaps and wings and pulleys—surrounded by patterned bunting, collaged news clips on the topic of aviation, and cryptic phrases and symbols. It's a fascinating œuvre; this is his first one-man show. Through Feb. 7. (Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819.)

Bob Knox—Large acrylics of interiors decorated in a time-capsule blend of sling-chair bonhomie and Cold War sterility. The artist's earlier interiors (of avocado kitchens, matched-set bedrooms, etc.) fit neatly into the school of sixties-suburban ironists; these taut panels, on the other hand, come alive with a more forbidding brand of cynical realism. Through Jan. 31. (Shainman, 513 W. 20th St. 645-1701.)

Daniel Oates—New carved-wood sculptures by the young British artist, whose previous mode was a wanly humorous social realism. Now he has taken a turn for the surreal, and the results are not entirely satisfactory. Through Feb. 14. (303 Gallery, 525 W. 22nd St. 255-1121.)

"Vertical Time"—This group show, curated by Francesco Bonami, has an international focus, with artists from Italy, France, the Netherlands, South Africa, and South Korea; heavy on video and installation, it also has the look of institutionalized avant-gardism. The South African William Kentridge's animated film, a hellish, expressionistic tour of his home country, is probably the most accessible and engaging of the lot. Through Feb. 21. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 206-9300.)

Group Show—Works by Eugenio Dittborn, Willie Doherty, Mona Hatoum, and Doris Salcedo. Through Feb. 28. (Alexander and Bonin, 132 Tenth Ave., at 18th St. 367-7474.)

Short List—**suzan batu** and **jeremy kidd,** Coploff, 526 W. 26th St. 674-1024. Both shows through Feb. 21. . . . **peter campus,** Cooper, 534 W. 21st St. 255-1105. Through Feb. 7. . . . **terri friedman,** Fredericks, 504 W. 22nd St. 633-6555. Through Feb. 7. . . . **ellen harvey and jaroslaw kozakiewicz,** De Folin, 529 W. 20th St. 242-3434. Through Feb. 14. . . . **gary hume,** Marks, 523 W. 24th St. 243-0200. Through Feb. 28. . . . **joan jonas,** Hearn, 530 W. 22nd St. 727-7366. Through Feb. 24. . . . **francisco leiro,** Marlborough, 211 W. 19th St. 463-8634. Through Feb. 7. . . . **omar lopez-chahoud,** DeChiara/Stewart, 521 W. 26th St. 967-6007. Through Feb. 21. . . . **helen marden,** Healy, 530 W. 22nd St. 243-3753. Through Feb. 28. . . . **peter newman,** I-20 Gallery, 529 W. 20th St. 645-1100. Through Feb. 21. . . . **dan witz,** Clementine, 526 W. 26th St. 243-5937. Through Feb. 21.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Rita Ackermann—Paintings by an artist who formerly favored linear renditions of nymphet junkies. The new works recycle various painterly styles—a smattering of Baselitz, Polke, Salle, Schnabel—to indifferent effect. Through Feb. 7. (Rosen, 130 Prince St. 941-0203.)

John Baldessari—"The Goya Series," recent ink-jet paintings and works on paper in which Baldessari juxtaposes fragments of laconic texts drawn from Goya's "Disasters of War" series with seemingly unrelated images; the results are very beautiful while remaining echt Conceptual. This may not be the artist's most compelling show, but so-so Baldessari is still better than just about anything else on the block. Through Feb. 14. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. 966-6160.)

Maureen Connor—"Love (at First) Site," three installations incorporating video and audio and, in one case, an interactive computer setup, involving different scenarios of heterosexual coupling and disappointment. In one, we're invited into the lounge of a sleazy operator; another proposes various aftermaths for a one-night stand. Through Feb. 7. (Marcus, 578 Broadway. 226-3200.)

Hanne Darboven—"Stone of Wisdom," a rather sedate installation compared with the extraordinary superflux of the German Conceptualist's recent Dia show, "Kulturgeschichte 1880-1983" (one of the great exhibitions of the last few years). This presentation is serene and extremely dry. Through Feb. 7. (Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. 431-3685.)

Elana Herzog—Sculptures fashioned from what look to be castoffs from the thrift store—old shower curtains, chenille bedspreads, a pink polyester blanket, a faded floral sheet, shiny gold drapery—cleverly transformed into amusing, sophisticated formal objects whose poise belies their homely origins. Through Feb. 7. (P.P.O.W, 476 Broome St. 941-8642.)

Marcel Odenbach—Videos and collages by a German artist who appears to be interested in war and racism—big, obvious themes. There are a lot of shocking images, but the artist's critical focus remains tentative and unclear. Through Jan. 31. (Kern, 558 Broadway. 965-1706.)

Paul Pagk—Salon abstractions for people who don't like modern art. Pagk favors soft-contour geometries in pretty colors; you might as well savor the Benjamin Moore catalogue. Through Feb. 7. (C.R.G., 93 Grand St. 966-4360.)

Ulrich Rückriem—A selection of minimal, monolithic sculptures, stunningly presented in the Ace Gallery's series of cavernous skylit rooms. Rückriem, a German artist who apprenticed as a stonemason some thirty years ago, selects enormous slabs of granite (from Finland, France, Spain, Africa), saws them into pieces, and then perfectly fits them together again, creating works that have the presence of mountains and the mystery of ancient tombs. Through Feb. 28. (275 Hudson St. 255-5599.)

Group Show—Sculptures by Kiki Smith and Anne Chu and a painting by Byron Kim. Through Feb. 28. (AC Project Room, 15 Renwick St. 219-8275.)

Short List—**MARIE JOSÉ BURKI,** Lehmann Maupin, 39 Greene St. 965-0753. Through March 14. . . . **SQUEAK CARNWATH,** Beitzel, 102 Prince St. 219-2863. Through Feb. 14. . . . **ECKHARD ETZOLD,** Au Base, 433 W. 14th St. 414-0563. Through Feb. 8. . . . **PAMELA FRASER,** Kaplan, 48 Greene St. 226-6131. Through Feb. 21. . . . **ELLIOTT GREEN** and **CHRISTIAN SCHUMANN,** Postmasters, 80 Greene St. 941-5711. Both shows through Feb. 7. . . . **MARK HANDFORTH** and **DARA FRIEDMAN,** Gavin Brown's Enterprise, 436 W. 15th St. 627-5258. Both shows through Feb. 14. . . . **CAMERON JAMIE,** Brownstone, 39 Wooster St. 334-3455. Through Feb. 11. . . . **WILLIAM KENTRIDGE,** The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. 219-2166. Open Wednesday evenings until 8; through Feb. 14. . . . **ANSELM KIEFER,** Gagosian, 136 Wooster St. 228-2828. Through Feb. 28. . . . **PAUL LAFFOLEY,** Kent, 67 Prince St. 966-4500. Through March 7. . . . **LYNN MC CARTY,** Hoffman, 429 West Broadway. 966-6676. Through Feb. 3. . . . **NICHOLAS MICROS,** Trans Hudson, 416 W. 13th St. 242-3232. Through Feb. 7. . . . **FRANÇOIS MORELLET,** Davies, 23 Commerce St. 243-6840. Through Jan. 31. . . . **ALEXANDROS PSYCHOULIS,** Deitch Projects, 76 Grand St. 343-7300. Through Feb. 7. . . . **JEANNE RISICA AND RON OTTAVIANO,** Dillon, 431 West Broadway. 966-2977. Through Feb. 9. . . . **ANDY WARHOL,** Feldman, 31 Mercer St. 226-3232. Through March 14. . . . **MICHAEL ZWACK,** Kasmin, 74 Grand St. 219-3219. Through Feb. 7.

AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES

Sotheby's—The highlight of a two-session Old Master drawings and paintings sale is the offering (in the opening session) of "Christ and the Woman of Samaria," a drawing in black chalk by Michelangelo, one of the very few still in private hands; it comes from a Swiss collection and is expected to sell for six and a half million dollars. Among the other offerings are works by Rembrandt, Rubens, Holbein, and Murillo. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 606-7000. Jan. 28 and Jan. 30.)

Christie's—On Jan. 29, important Old Master paintings, including oils by Van Dyke and El Greco. Also this week, varied European art works (Jan. 28) and Old Master drawings (Jan. 30). (Park Ave. at 59th St. 546-1119.)

National Black Fine Art Show. (Puck Building, Houston and Lafayette Sts. Jan. 30-Feb. 1, with a benefit preview on Jan. 29. For information, call 777-5218.)

PHOTOGRAPHY

Marvin E. Newman—The inaugural exhibition of the Keith De Lellis gallery features "Shadows, 1951," a series of pictures made on the streets of Chicago by this somewhat overlooked veteran photographer. Through Jan. 31. (47 E. 68th St. 327-1482.)

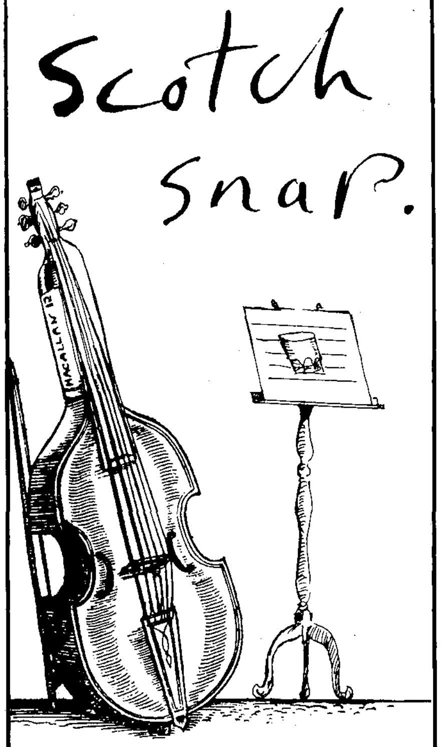
Richard Rothman—"Shrubs," a selection of photographs taken over a six-year period, which superbly illuminate our relationship with the often meagre landscape of New York City and its environs. The first picture you see, in the gallery's stairwell, is the most dramatic: a two-trunked front-yard birch has been polled at about seven feet and adorned with cloth markers that look like pathetic, useless bandages; the gently understated title, "Pruned Birch with Ribbons," only intensifies the grisliness. In another mesmerizing picture, a weeping blue cypress sits on its root ball at a Long Island nursery, its branches outstretched as if to say, "I've been ready for a while." The rest of the two dozen clear-eyed images here are no less poetic but sometimes more hopeful. Through Feb. 7. (Sorokko, 430 West Broadway. 941-8888.)

Arne Svenson / Penelope Umbrico—Highly seductive prints of prisoners, from the artist's collection of early-twentieth-century glass-plate mug shots. / New abstract work whose subject is mail-order catalogues. Both shows through Feb. 21. (Saul, 560 Broadway. 431-0747.)

"The Cottingley Fairies and Other Apparitions"—The sprites the title alludes to were the creations of two young cousins, Elsie Wright and Frances Griffiths, who, in 1917, in their West Yorkshire hamlet, produced two photographs, each of a winged being prancing beside a young girl. (The cousins happily confessed to their hoax in 1982.) In addition, the show presents "spirit" photographs from the nineteenth century and works by a great lineup of artists, including Eugène Atget, Jacques Henri Lartigue, James Van Der Zee, Duane Michals, Vik Muniz, and Nancy Burson. Through Feb. 21. (Tonkonow, 601 W. 26th St. 255-8450.)

"Male"—A show of ruminations on the masculine in photographs and other mediums, curated by *Village Voice* photography critic and art editor Vince Aletti. Among the artists represented are Wilhelm von Gloeden, Cecil Beaton, Jean Cocteau, Sally Mann, John Dugdale, Rosalind Solomon, Tseng Kwong Chi, and David Wojnarowicz. Through Feb. 22. (Wessel and O'Connor, 242 W. 26th St. 242-8811. Open Sundays.)

"The 19th-Century Painted Photograph"—Hand-painted family-portrait and postmortem tintypes, as well as salt, albumen, and gelatin-



A manuscript from a Conservatoire of Music

Sirs, it may have come to your notice that in music we have a term *'Scotch Snap'.* This usually takes the form of a semiquaver followed by a dotted quaver, a device favoured particularly by baroque composers such as Handel giving a distinctive 'jerky' character to a dance tune.

It has been suggested in the Professors' Common Room that this figure derived its name from the rough liquors of the time which imparted *a sudden jolt to the Scottish tastebuds.*

Today, of course, we have The Macallan Single Highland Malt Whisky, which provides such a delectable legato that the *Scotch* snap has become quite forgotten – except of course in those bars where only baser spirits are jiggered out (in which case, may we suggest a *bar's rest?*).

Yours etc., Ian Curror,

FRCO (CHM), GRSM, ARCM, LRAM *and BAR.*

THE MACALLAN.
THE SINGLE MALT
SCOTCH.

THE MACALLAN® Scotch Whisky. 43% alc./vol.
Imported by Rémy Amerique, Inc., New York, N.Y.
© 1997 Macallan-Glenlivet P.L.C.

silver prints. Through Feb. 7. (Ricco/Maresca, 529 W. 20th St. 627-4819.)

"WITH AND WITHOUT GRAVITY"—A show of all the pictures in the new issue (No. 10) of the journal *Blind Spot*. Among the artists are Gregory Crewdson, Martin Parr, Lou Reed, Richard Misrach, and Marilyn Bridges. Through Feb. 17. (SoHo Triad Fine Arts, 107 Grand St. 965-9500. Open daily.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY—"Nelly: From Athens to New York, the Work of Elli Seraïdari." . . . ¶ "Images from the Machine Age: Selections from the Daniel Cowin Collection." Both shows through Feb. 22. (1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY MIDTOWN—"Weegee's World: Life, Death and the Human Drama," a two-hundred-picture exhibition that spans the tabloid photographer's career. Through March 8. (Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. 860-1777. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

SHORT LIST—**ANTON BRUEHL,** Greenberg, 120 Wooster St. 334-0010. Through March 7. . . . **PAUL CAPONIGRO,** Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St. 888-1122. Through Feb. 14. . . . **TONI FRISSELL,** Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway. 966-6223. Through Feb. 21. . . . **JAN GROOVER,** Borden, 560 Broadway. 431-0166. Through Feb. 21. . . . **YEVGENY KHALDEI,** Schickler, 560 Broadway. 431-6363. Through Feb. 21. . . . **ROSE MARASCO,** Morthland, 225 Tenth Ave., between 23rd and 24th Sts. 242-7767. Through March 7. . . . **TANYA MARCUSE,** Yoshii, 20 W. 57th St. 265-8876. Through Feb. 28. . . . **MARTA MARIA PEREZ BRAVO,** Throckmorton, 153 E. 61st St. 223-1059. Through March 15. . . . **JOSÉ PICAYO,** Rice, 325 W. 11th St. 366-6660. Open Thursdays through Saturdays, 1 to 7, Sundays, 1 to 6; through Feb. 28. . . . **ROBERTO SCHEZEN,** Houk, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. 750-7070. Through March 14 . . . . **DAVID (CHIM) SEYMOUR,** Gallery 292, at 120 Wooster St. 431-0292. Through March 7. . . . **KIKI SMITH** and **JOEY KÖTTING,** Pace Wildenstein MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 759-7999. Both shows through March 7. . . . **RUTH THORNE-THOMSEN** and **ROBERT FRANK,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. 226-1220. Both shows through Feb. 21. . . . **RANDY WEST,** Richardson, 560 Broadway. 343-1255. Through Feb. 21. . . . **CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS,** Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. 219-9600. Through Feb. 7.

(See the museum listings for a photography exhibition at the New York Public Library.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

(The box-office number for Alice Tully Hall is 875-5050; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 501-3330.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**DIE ZAUBERFLÖTE,** with Barbara Bonney, Mary Dunleavy, Frank Lopardo, Gerald Finley, John Cheek, and Franz Hawlata; conducted by Edo de Waart. (Jan. 28 at 7:30 and Feb. 2 at 8.) . . . **L'ELISIR D'AMORE,** with Ruth Ann Swenson, Luciano Pavarotti, Earle Patriarco, and Paul Plishka; Maurizio Benini. (Jan. 29 and Feb. 3 at 8.) . . . **LES CONTES D'HOFFMANN,** with Natalie Dessay, Patricia Racette, Jennifer Larmore, Susanne Mentzer, Richard Leech, and James Morris; Simone Young. (Jan. 30 at 8.) . . . Strauss's **CAPRICCIO,** with Kiri Te Kanawa, Kathryn Harries, David Kuebler, Simon Keenlyside, Wolfgang Brendel, and Jan-Hendrik Rootering; Andrew Davis. (Jan. 31 at 1:30.) . . . **IL TROVATORE,** with June Anderson, Barbara Dever, Richard Margison, and Juan Pons; Ms. Young. (Jan. 31 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House. 362-6000.)

"ARIODANTE"—Handel's 1735 opera, in a semi-staged student performance. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802, ext. 428. Jan. 28 at 7:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—Christoph Eschenbach conducts Bruckner's Symphony No. 8, in the Leopold Nowak edition, which, in the complicated morass of Bruckner editions, hews closely to the revision the composer made with his pupil Josef Schalk in 1889 and 1890. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Jan. 29 and Jan. 31 at 8, Jan. 30 at 2, and Feb. 3 at 7:30.)

NEW YORK POPS—Conductor Skitch Henderson celebrates his eightieth birthday with a program that traces the highlights of his career, from his stint as an M-G-M rehearsal pianist in the nineteen-thirties through his years as a radio and television bandleader for NBC and on to his founding of the New York Pops fifteen years ago. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 29 at 7:30. A benefit concert.)

RIVERSIDE SYMPHONY—George Rothman conducts Stravinsky's "Song of the Nightingale," orchestrated selections from Strauss's "Brentano-Lieder" (featuring soprano Lisa Saffer), and Andrew Imbrie's Requiem (with the New York Virtuoso Singers). (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 29 at 8.)

ST. PAUL CHAMBER ORCHESTRA—Hugh Wolff leads Aaron Jay Kernis's "Too Hot Toccata," Virgil Thomson's Chopin's E-Minor Piano Concerto (featuring Emanuel Ax), and Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 3. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 30 at 8. . . . **NOTE:** The musicians also present a family concert at Carnegie Hall on Jan. 31 at 2.)

PROMETHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA—Ives's Third Symphony ("The Camp Meeting"), Strauss's "Metamorphosen," and Beethoven's Symphony No. 2 are conducted by Wilson Hermanto. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 31 at 8.)

CURTIS INSTITUTE ORCHESTRA—Peter Oundjian conducts the student ensemble from Philadelphia in Stravinsky's Concerto in D for String Orchestra, Mozart's A-Major Piano Concerto (K. 488, featuring Rieko Aizawa), and Shostakovich's Chamber Symphony (Op. 100a). (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. Feb. 1 at 2. For information about tickets, call 586-4680.)

NEW YORK CHORAL SOCIETY—John Daly Goodwin directs the choir, the Choral Arts Society of Philadelphia, the American Boychoir, and the Delaware Symphony Orchestra in Mahler's massive Symphony No. 8, the "Symphony of a Thousand." (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Feb. 1 at 7.)

PHILADELPHIA ORCHESTRA—Wolfgang Sawallisch directs a program that spotlights several of the orchestra's principal players: Rossini's "La Scala di Seta" Overture, Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante (K. 364, with violinist Erez Ofer and violist Roberto Díaz), Henri Tomasi's Trumpet Concerto (with David Bilger), Roland Pöntinen's "Blue Winter" (with trombonist Nitzan Haroz), and Ravel's "La Valse." (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 3 at 8.)

JUILLIARD SYMPHONY—David Loebel conducts Robert Beaser's Piano Concerto (with Eric Huebner as soloist) and Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique." (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 3 at 8. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 769-7406.)

RECITALS

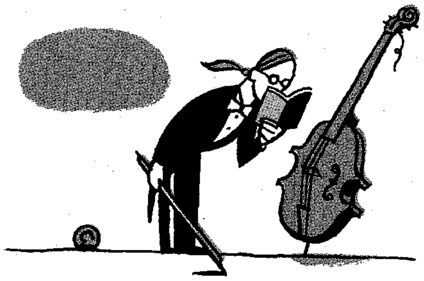
CHITOSE OKASHIRO AND THE AMERNET STRING QUARTET—The pianist and the ensemble perform a program comprising Takemitsu's "Away Alone," Mozart's C-Major Piano Concerto (K. 415, in the composer's own piano-quintet reduction), and Franck's Piano Quintet. (Weill Recital Hall. Jan. 28 at 7:30.)

STEVEN OSBORNE—The pianist, a co-winner of the 1997 Naumburg International Piano Competition, performs Bach's French Suite in G Major, Ravel's "Miroirs," three movements from Messiaen's "Vingt Regards sur l'Enfant Jésus," and the third of Liszt's

BOOK CURRENTS

Musical Lives

IN music, the rests can be just as important as the notes themselves. The same might be said of prose. "Books don't have to tell us everything," says the Pulitzer Prize-winning classical-music critic and poet Lloyd Schwartz. "Sometimes, reading between the lines is as much a part of the pleasure." Schwartz describe Virgil Thomson's **VIRGIL THOMSON** (out of print) as "a dazzlingly written, wonderfully witty, lucid autobiography, in which he leaves out all the personal things about his life." He finds it fascinating in light of Anthony Tommasini's recent biography of the composer and critic, **VIRGIL THOMSON: COMPOSER ON THE AISLE** (Norton). Schwartz takes similar pleasure in **MY WIFE, MARIA CALLAS** (out of print), by Giovanni Battista Meneghini, the singer's ex-husband, an Italian businessman much older than she was. He calls it "a very sweet book that, unlike some books on Callas, you can really believe."



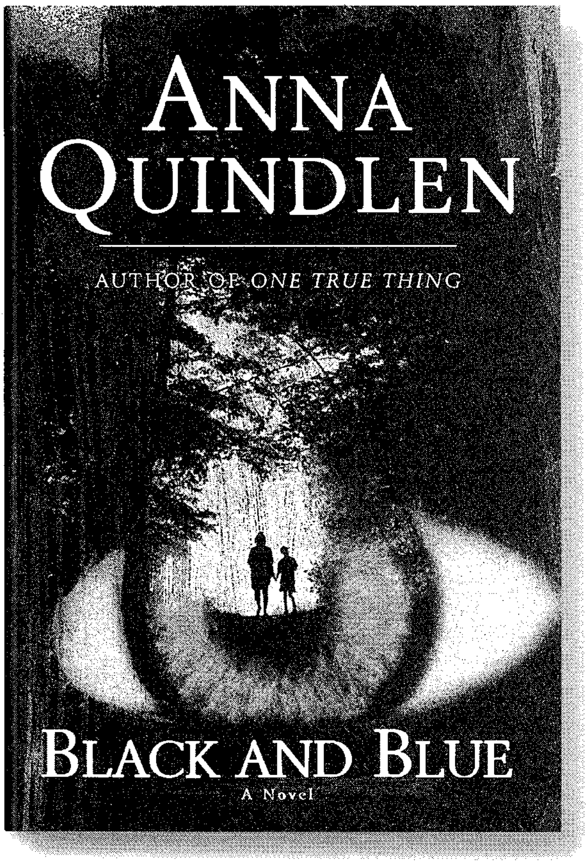
EVER MEULEN

Also on the subject of Callas, Schwartz admires James McCourt's satirical roman à clef **MAWRDEW CZGOWCHWZ** (pronounced "Mardu Gorgeous"; out of print): "In some ways, as a work of complete fiction, it's the best biography of a singer ever written." Among more factual memoirs, he cites Peter Heyworth's **OTTO KLEMPERER: HIS LIFE AND TIMES** (Cambridge), a "riveting" two-volume biography of the German conductor; and he calls Hector Berlioz's **MEMOIRS** (Dover) "maybe the most important musical autobiography." Schwartz also loves memoirs by two of his musical idols, **MY LIFE AND MUSIC** (Dover), by the pianist Artur Schnabel, and the violinist Joseph Szigeti's wittily titled **WITH STRINGS ATTACHED** (Da Capo), which he esteems for its "humility and seriousness."

As for other critics, Schwartz always returns to the "very personal, extremely cantankerous" opinions of B. H. Haggin. The author of such books as **MUSIC ON RECORDS** and **MUSIC FOR THE MAN WHO ENJOYS HAMLET** (both out of print) was "absolutely uninhibited about his opinions of other critics." Responding to an unfavorable opinion of Balanchine in the *Times*, Haggin wrote that the critic "has an unerring eye for genius and an utter detestation of it."

SHE THOUGHT SHE HAD THE MARRIAGE OF HER DREAMS. SOON, IT BECAME A LIVING NIGHTMARE.

A stunning new novel by Anna Quindlen.



Price effective through 2/12/98.

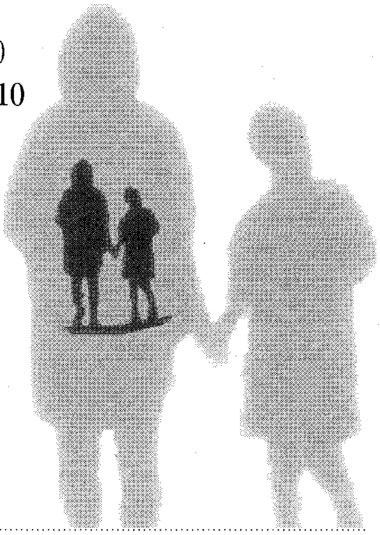
Black and Blue

by Anna Quindlen

Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and bestselling author Anna Quindlen once again makes her mark on the world of fiction with this stunning novel about a marriage that begins in passion—but becomes a nightmare. Quindlen is acclaimed for her *New York Times* column "Public and Private," and her bestselling novels, *Object Lessons* and *One True Thing*. (Random House)

Pub. Price $23.00

B&N Price $16.10



http://www.barnesandnoble.com ▪ aol keyword: barnesandnoble

Barnes & Noble
Booksellers Since 1873

"Harmonies Poétiques et Réligieuses." (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 28 at 8.)

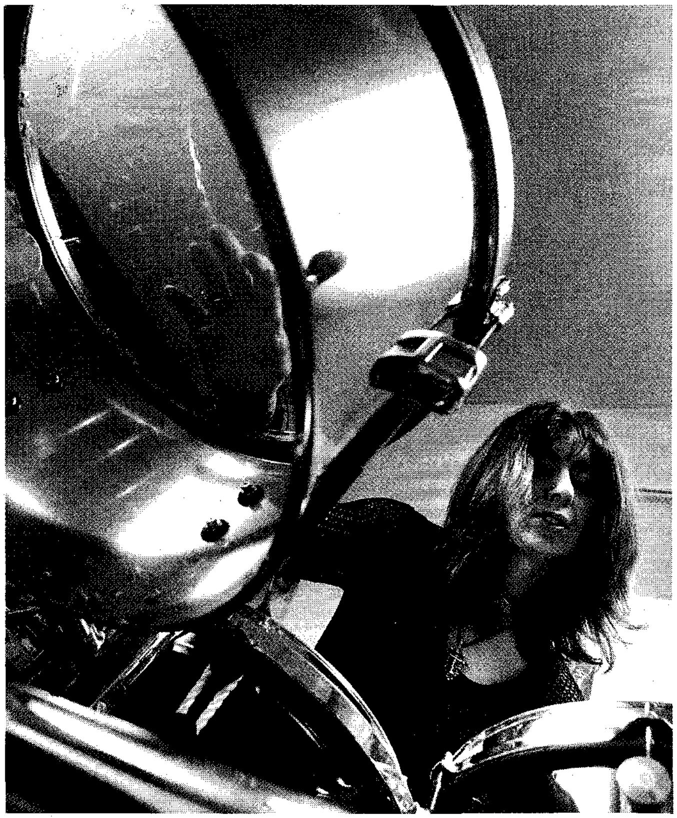
Focus! 1998—Juilliard's festival of new music from Scandinavia concludes. Jan. 28 at 8: Chamber works by eight composers from the five northerly nations. (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St.) . . . ¶ Jan. 29 at 8: Compositions by Paavo Heininen (of Finland) and Arne Nordheim (Norway), among others. (Juilliard Theatre.) . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: Robert Duerr conducts the Juilliard Orchestra in pieces by Anders Hultqvist (of Sweden), Haukur Tómasson (Iceland), Olav Anton Thommessen (Norway), Jukka Tiensuu (Finland), and Poul Ruders (Denmark—his "Concerto in Pieces"). (Alice Tully Hall. . . . **note:** For information about free tickets, which are required for all events, call 769-7406.)

Bargemusic—Presenting the Magellan String Quartet, in performances of quartets by Beethoven (in F Minor, Op. 95), Osvaldo Golijov (his "Yiddishbbuk"), and Schumann (in A Major). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 718-624-4061. Jan. 29 at 7:30 and Feb. 1 at 2.)

James Richman and Catherine Turocy—A program by the husband-and-wife harpsichord-and-Baroque-dance team (with several colleagues) which shows how seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English composers embraced the musical style of the French court; including works by Couperin, Purcell, Rameau, and Handel. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Jan. 29 at 8.)

New York New Music Ensemble—Jan. 29 at 8: Presenting works by composer Jonathan Kramer. The concert also spotlights performance artist Brenda Hutchinson and pianist "Blue" Gene Tyranny. (Merkin Concert Hall.) . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 8: Performing works by Harrison, Xenakis, Carter, and others. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802, ext. 494.)

Franz Hawlata—In his first New York recital, the bass (a regular on the Metropolitan Opera's roster) performs songs by Loewe, Wolf, Franz Reutter, Hanns Eisler, and Strauss; Leonard Hokanson is the evening's pianist. (Weill Recital Hall. Jan. 30 at 8.)



Percussionist Evelyn Glennie, in recital at Alice Tully Hall.

St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble—Jan. 30 at 8: The instrumentalists present an all-Bach concert comprising the A-Major Violin Concerto, the "Brandenburg" Concerto No. 5, and, with soprano Heidi Grant Murphy, the Cantatas No. 51 ("Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen!") and No. 209 ("Non sa che sia dolore"). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949.) . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 2: Chamber works by Heitor Villa-Lobos (including his String Quartet No. 1) and Astor Piazzolla. (Cantor Auditorium, Brooklyn Museum of Art, Eastern Parkway. For information about tickets, call 212-840-7470.)

Barbara Bonney—The soprano performs songs by Schumann ("Frauenliebe und -leben"), Grieg, Britten ("On This Island"), and Barber (his "Hermit Songs"); with pianist Warren Jones. (Carnegie Hall. Jan. 31 at 7:30.)

Evelyn Glennie—One of the few classical percussionists with an international career as a soloist, this Scottish performer works her way through a vast array of instruments in a recital of works by John Psathas, Joseph Schwantner, Ian Finkel, John McLeod, Frederic Rzewski, and Michael Gordon. Pianist Philip Smith assists. (Alice Tully Hall. Jan. 31 at 8.)

Vladimir Feltsman—The pianist performs Bach's C-Minor Partita, Beethoven's Sonata No. 31, and Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. Jan. 31 at 8.)

Emerson String Quartet—Continuing its series juxtaposing works by Beethoven with works by twentieth-century masters, the foursome offers Beethoven's Quartets in A Major (Op. 18, No. 5) and A Minor (Op. 132), and Ives's Quartet No. 2. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 1 at 2.)

Winslow Browning—Performing solo-guitar works by Albéniz, Tárrega, and other Spanish composers. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 1 at 2.)

Eos Ensemble—The 1939 World's Fair is still remembered for the enthusiasm with which it endorsed the technologically driven world that lay ahead, but for some reason the prominence of music at the fair has been forgotten—perhaps because the vibrant, optimistic scores introduced there were soon drowned out by the cerebral serialism that came to dominate American music. In this concert, Jonathan Sheffer leads the group in works that were written for, or at least performed at, the fair: William Grant Still's "Song of a City: Trylon and Perisphere," Vaughan Williams's Five Variants on "Dives and Lazarus," Copland's puppet ballet "From Sorcery to Science" (which will be staged in this performance) and excerpts from his score for "The City" (his first film project), and Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" (here in Ferde Grofé's theatre-orchestra arrangement, with pianist Michael Boriskin) and his "Dawn of a New Day" (assembled by Ira Gershwin from fragments the composer left at his death, and here featuring singer and pianist Michael Feinstein). Two prominent New Yorkers who were there the first time around, Kitty Carlisle Hart and Schuyler Chapin, keep the proceedings proceeding. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 2 at 8. . . . **note:** Ticket holders are offered two pre-concert events at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theatre: at 5, a screening of the documentary film "The City," which boasts the first soundtrack Copland composed; and, at 6, a lecture and discussion on music at the fair.)

Charles Wadsworth and Friends—The pianist is joined by violinist Juliette Kang, clarinettist Todd Palmer, and cellist Andrés Díaz in a concert of chamber works by Brahms, Stravinsky, and Ravel. (Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St. 685-0008, ext. 347. Feb. 3 at 6:15.)

Music by Harbison—Composer John Harbison will be on hand to discuss several of his works, including his String Quartet No. 3 (played by the Lydian String Quartet) and his "Five Uncollected Songs" (performed by mezzo-soprano Lorraine Hunt, with the composer at the piano). Movements of chamber works by Bach and Schumann complete the program. (Weill Recital Hall. Feb. 3 at 8.)

Anton Barachovsky—In his New York début recital, the violinist (with pianist Rohan De Silva) offers sonatas by Mozart, Brahms (his Third), and Schnittke, as well as Saint-Saëns's "Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso." Presented by Young Concert Artists. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. Feb. 3 at 8. For information about tickets, call 307-6655.)

David Holzman—The pianist, an aficionado of demanding twentieth-century scores, offers Carter's Piano Sonata, Wolpe's "From the Palestinian Notebook," Perle's Ballade, and works by Sergei Berinski, Martin Brody, and Arthur Kreiger. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 3 at 8.)

Brass and Organ—A "sonic spectacular" concert of works by Gabrieli, Strauss, and others, with a brass ensemble and organist Nancianne Parrella. Kent Tritle conducts. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 288-2520. Feb. 3 at 8.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

The Other Side—A new hybrid of humor has taken root over the past four years at Surf Reality, a second-floor loft on the Lower East Side. David Jenness, a practitioner of the nascent form, known variously as alternative vaudeville, performance comedy, and alternative comedy, explains: "Comedy was dead. The guy in front of the brick wall telling jokes had become a cliché. 'Alternative comedy' is a nebulous term, but jokes are not in. It's more a blend of poetry, music, and dance. Like alternative music was to rock and roll." On Jan. 31 at 8, Surf Reality hosts a masked ball in honor of its Producer's Asylum, an alliance of regular acts at the venue. On the bill are the American Vaudeville Theatre; puppeteer Gilda Konrad, whose act features a milk carton and a towel; and Jenness's own group, Sacred Clowns, a musical-comedy combo that Jenness says is "modelled on an African dance party." Fancy dress is encouraged. (172 Allen St. For more information, call 545-7114.)

Readings—Jan. 28 at 6:30: Editor and publisher Robert Giroux and writer Alfred Kazin join actors Linda Lavin, Louis Zorich, and Marian Seldes, for an evening of Bernard Malamud's short stories. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) . . . ¶ Jan. 29 at 7: Novelist Steven Millhauser ("Martin Dressler") and social critic Luc Sante ("Low Life") read from their own work and from other writings about New York City. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 229-5488.)

Talk—Feb. 3 at 6:30: *New Yorker* writer Lawrence Weschler evokes the Los Angeles of the nineteen-thirties and forties, home to Thomas Mann, Bertolt Brecht, Aldous Huxley, and other intellectual refugees from Hitler's Europe, including Weschler's émigré grandfather, the composer Ernst Toch. (Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St. 423-3224.)

JAKE CHESSUM

PURE PLEASURE

FLYING ROUND THE WORLD: Not as pricey as you think
Condé Nast
Traveler
TRUTH IN TRAVEL
MARCH 1996 $3.95
BEING THERE
25 EXTRAORDINARY PLACES WORTH THAT EXTRA MILE
THE DORDOGNE
Feasting on epic France
INSIDE TEHRAN
Islam with attitude
THE MEDITERRANEAN
Civilization's cradle as you've never seen it

JUST $1 AN ISSUE

If you'd dash in a flash to a spa. A ski slope. A château. A chalet. A pretty Portuguese posada. Or a quaint New England inn…

If you'd catch the next flight to Spain, Maine, Montreux. Montana. A castle. A cottage. A seaside escape…

Then welcome to Condé Nast Traveler. It brings you the most exquisite pleasures. The most enticing places. The best travel savings. The best travel tips.

Every month you'll find the top picks of the world's smartest travelers. Plus take along charts and maps, so you can get around like a native anywhere in the world!

You'll know the airlines to use. The flights to choose. The best hotels. The best restaurants. The best beaches. The best rooms with a view.

Plus how to get more sun for your money. How to get more fun for your money. How to save on airfares and heirlooms. And all the travel values all over the world.

From the publishers of Gourmet, Vogue and Vanity Fair, Condé Nast Traveler brings you pure pleasure for just $1 a month. Subscribe today at the lowest price you can find anywhere! If card is missing, write to Condé Nast Traveler, P.O. Box 52469, Boulder, Colorado 80322-2469.

KICK BACK

NEW YORK
Barbizon
HOTEL

63rd STREET
AT LEXINGTON AVENUE
212.838.5700

Reservations: 800.223.1020
THE BUSINESS OF LEISURE

THE ONLY
AROUND THE WORLD
BY PRIVATE CONCORDE
HAWAII • NEW ZEALAND • AUSTRALIA
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA
(BEIJING AND HONG KONG)
INDIA • KENYA • FRANCE
TWO 1998 DEPARTURES
September 15 to October 8, 1998
October 8 to 31, 1998
$55,800 per person, double occupancy
Designed and Operated by INTRAV
7711 Bonhomme Ave. • St. Louis, MO 63105-1961
1-800-964-0500

1998 Traveler's Guide to Art Museum Exhibitions
The perfect gift "for art lovers who travel, and travelers who love art..."
Expanded 10th Anniversary Edition of the premier guide to over 1,500 exhibitions in the U.S. and abroad now lists nearly 300 museums, with website addresses and programs for children... only $16, includes shipping and handling.
RECOMMENDED BY THE NY TIMES, WASH. POST, VOGUE, GOURMET
CALL 1-800-2-LOVE-ART (1-800-256-8327) MGP, INC.
P.O. BOX 25369, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20007

THE MOVIES

OPENINGS

Deceiver—A psychological thriller, written and directed by Jonas and Josh Pate, that pits a murder suspect (Tim Roth) against two police investigators (Chris Penn and Michael Rooker). Also with Renée Zellweger. Opening Jan. 30. (Art Greenwich Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, Embassy 3, First & 62nd Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Orpheum VII.)

Deep Rising—A thriller about carnivorous sea creatures that attack a luxury cruise ship. With Treat Williams, Famke Janssen, and Anthony Heald. Written and directed by Stephen Sommers. Opening Jan. 30. (84th Street Sixplex, 86th Street East Cinemas, Embassy 1, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas.)

Desperate Measures—Barbet Schroeder's suspense tale centers on a police officer (Andy Garcia) whose son needs a bone-marrow transplant and a homicidal prisoner (Michael Keaton) who is a perfect DNA fit. Opening Jan. 30. (Criterion Center, East 85th Street, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, and Village East Cinemas.)

Four Days in September—A film by Bruno Barreto, based on the kidnapping, in September, 1969, of the American ambassador to Brazil. With Alan Arkin, Pedro Cardoso, Claudia Abreu, and Fernanda Torres. Opening Jan. 30. (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Great Expectations—A modern-day version of Dickens's novel, starring Ethan Hawke, Gwyneth Paltrow, Anne Bancroft, and Robert De Niro. Directed by Alfonso Cuarón. Opening Jan. 30. (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, Orpheum VII, and Ziegfeld.)

Killing Time—A suspense comedy directed by Bharat Nalluri, about a murder and its aftermath. Opening Jan. 30. (Village East Cinemas.)

No Ordinary Love—Writer-director Doug Witkins's gay comedy-drama looks at the lives and loves of five housemates in Los Angeles. Opening Jan. 30. (Village East Cinemas.)

Village of Dreams—A film based on the childhood remembrances of Japanese twins who spent their boyhood in the countryside in the years immediately following the Second World War. Directed by Yoichi Higashi. In Japanese. Opening Jan. 30. (Cinema Village.)

Zero Effect—Two detectives (Bill Pullman and Ben Stiller) are hired to find a set of lost keys for a timber tycoon (Ryan O'Neal), in a mystery written and directed by Jake Kasdan. Opening Jan. 30. (Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Village Theatre VII.)

FILM NOTES

(If a movie has been reviewed recently in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given.)

Afterglow—The still radiant Julie Christie stars in the improbable role of a former B-movie actress married to a small-time handyman (Nick Nolte) who dabbles big-time in infidelity. She lolls in her bathrobe, watching old movies of herself, while he tools around Montreal in his red van, fixing the apartments and the love lives of his female clients. He gets involved with a fetching young thing (Lara Flynn Boyle) married to a caricature of a career-obsessed yuppie (Jonny Lee Miller), and the yuppie picks up Christie at a hotel bar; all manner of droll carryings-on ensue, leading to a final scene in which Christie's coolly ironic persona gives way to a startling—and uncharacteristic—display of raw emotion. Written and directed by Alan Rudolph, who can't seem to decide whether the film is a highly stylized French farce or a Pinteresque drama of disconnection.—*Daphne Merkin* (1/19/98) (Angelika Film Center and Regency.)

Amistad—The title ship was the site of an 1839 rebellion in which a gang of slaves overpowered the crew and demanded their return to Africa; the men were then tricked into landing on the coast of Connecticut. In Steven Spielberg's movie, a young attorney (Matthew McConaughey) argues their case, which then proceeds to the Supreme Court, where the rebel leader (Djimon Hounsou) is represented by a former President, John Quincy Adams (Anthony Hopkins). Hounsou has forbidding presence, but there is only so much that Spielberg can do to relieve the burden of the double courtroom drama, and this wordy, noble film runs dry of visual surprise. With Morgan Freeman as an abolitionist and Nigel Hawthorne as Martin Van Buren.—*Anthony Lane* (First and 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, State, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Apostle—Robert Duvall wrote, directed, and stars in a film about the transformation of a defrocked minister. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas; starting Jan. 30.)

As Good as It Gets—A romantic comedy directed and co-written (with Mark Andrus) by James L. Brooks ("Terms of Endearment," "Broadcast News"), in which an improbable trio—quartet, if you count the dog—overcomes a heap of troubles and finds collective happiness, sitcom style. Jack Nicholson stars as a romance novelist with an obsessive-compulsive disorder and a seriously alienating manner, Helen Hunt is a waitress with a young son who has a life-threatening disease, and Greg Kinnear is a gay painter with a sweet smile and no visible erotic attachments (not to mention the dog, a Brussels griffon who links the threesome together with his big-eyed adorableness). Brooks's gleaming manipulativeness and trendy pieties may make you grumpy; you keep expecting to hear a laugh track.—*D.M.* (1/5/98) (Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, 64th and 2nd, and Village East Cinemas.)

The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman (1974)—Cicely Tyson plays a woman who was born in slavery and lived to take part in a civil-rights demonstration in 1962; the role spans Jane Pittman's life from the age of twenty to the age of a hundred and ten, and Tyson knows what she's doing every inch of the way. Jane isn't a deep woman; childless, uneducated, she's an enjoyer of life. It isn't until extreme old age gives her a privileged status that she loses her fear and becomes—briefly, just before her death—free enough to speak her mind and to crack a joke and to find herself. When she walks up to a whites-only drinking fountain in front of a Southern courthouse, and drinks from it, all of us in the audience can taste the good water. Based on a novel by Ernest J. Gaines and made for television, the film was directed by the self-effacing John Korty; watching it, you forget (as readers of the novel did) that it's fiction.—*Pauline Kael* (Museum of Television and Radio; starting Feb. 1.)

The Boxer—The director-and-actor team of Jim Sheridan and Daniel Day-Lewis are back on the troubled Irish turf of "In the Name of the Father," but this time the rigid demarcation lines of internecine strife have softened. Day-Lewis plays Danny Flynn, a former I.R.A. recruit who returns to Belfast after fourteen years in prison and rebuilds a community boxing club in the hope of uniting Protestants and Catholics. Along the way he takes up with a youthful flame (Emily Watson, of "Breaking the Waves") now married to his best friend; the lovers cleave to each other in the face of warnings and bloody recriminations from Flynn's former terrorist comrades. The movie is stronger on atmosphere (the whole thing is wonderfully lit, as if by flares) than on specifics, but the quiet intensity of Day-Lewis's performance gives it genuine force.—*D.M.* (1/19/98) (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Waverly.)

Deconstructing Harry—Woody Allen casts himself as a famous Jewish novelist who ridicules and cheats on women and then appropriates their life stories for his fiction. As a director, Allen seems to be shooting for a new style of ruthless honesty: the film's tone is almost abusively dark. But clear away the pseudoprofound talk about the immorality of genius and all you're left with is a bunch of celebrity cameos and outdated gags.—*Sarah Kerr* (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Sutton, and Village East Cinemas. . . . ¶ East 85th Street; through Jan. 29.)

Fallen—Apocalyptic fluff starring Denzel Washington as a cop who has sent a killer to the electric chair; it turns out that the killer was inhabited by a vengeful fallen angel whose spirit moves from person to person. The demon could be posing as an old lady, a yuppie father, a child: the only clues are that it's left-handed and it likes to sing "Time Is on My Side." There's a crazy democratic horror in the idea that anyone on the street might be a temporary host for evil, and the scenes of the cop standing, terrified, in the middle of a crowd work up a nice, campy dread. But Nicholas Kazan's script doesn't carry this wild conceit far enough. Everything about the film is too cautious—including Washington, who does his usual turn as a sober and moral man, when what you want is to see him deeply rattled. Directed by Gregory Hoblit.—*S.K.* (Coronet Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Full Monty—An amiable light comedy, directed by Peter Cattaneo, about six unemployed British steelworkers who mount an all-male strip show for cash. The script, by Simon Beaufoy, is clean and well developed. Each character is given his bit to do, and when the motley crew comes together the actors all work wonderfully with one another, finding a sexy, warm performance rhythm as they gyrate to some classic seventies disco. Two actors—Mark Addy, who plays an overweight, insecure worker, and Robert Carlyle, as the ringleader—are sensational.—*Bruce Diones* (The Screening Room and Sutton.)

The Gingerbread Man—A thriller about a Savannah lawyer (Kenneth Branagh) whose life and family are threatened by a lunatic and a hurricane. Based on a story by John Grisham. Directed by Robert Altman. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea Cinemas, Coronet Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

Good Will Hunting—In which Matt Damon demonstrates his purchase on star power by giving Robin Williams a run for his money when it comes to holding audience interest. Damon plays Will Hunting, a belligerent working-class genius from South Boston who's been abused in foster homes and is now being given a chance to triumph over his past; Williams is the maverick shrink who helps him understand his demons, and Minnie Driver is the unsnobbish Harvard girlfriend who tries to heal him with acceptance. If it sounds treacly, it's not, thanks to a honed script (co-written by Damon and Ben Affleck, who plays Will's best pal) and subtle performances. Flecked with humor as well as sentiment, it's been directed with surprising warmth by Gus Van Sant. This remarkably uncynical and un-Gen-X-ish movie is about learning to trust when you've been given no reason to; unless you're committed to the Quentin Tarantino Weltanschauung, you won't come away unmoved.—*D.M.* (1/19/98) (Angelika Film Center, Chelsea West, Lincoln Square, New York Twin, and State.)

Hard Rain—A drama directed by Mikael Salomon, about an armored-car robbery in a flooded Indiana town. Starring Morgan Freeman, Christian Slater, Randy Quaid, and Min-

DEMPSEY & CARROLL
Stationery Engravers
since 1878

ENGRAVED STATIONERY SALE

$119.
(REGULARLY $196)

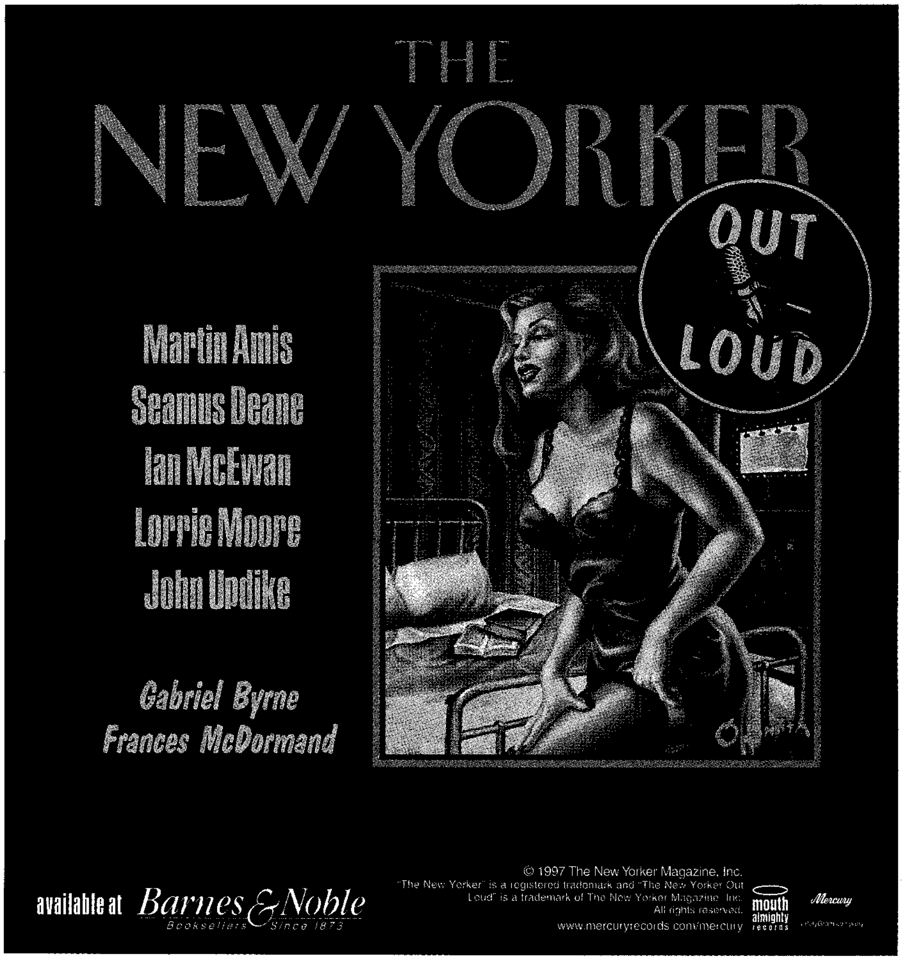
1. Veronica Shante Lilly
2. COLLIN B. NEWMAN
3. GEORGE R. MACMILLAN
4. Stephanie D. Peterson

100 WHITE OR ECRU CORRESPONDENCE CARDS AND ENVELOPES
NAME ENGRAVED ON CARDS IN RED, BLUE, GREEN OR BLACK INK
NEW NAME DIE INCLUDED

RETURN ADDRESS, BORDERS AND ENVELOPE LINING
AVAILABLE AT AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE

UNTIL FEBRUARY 14, 1998

110 EAST 57TH STREET · NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10022 · 212-486-7526
750 SEVENTEENTH STREET, NW · WASHINGTON, DC 20006 · 202-331-0550
800 444 4019



© 1997 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.
"The New Yorker" is a registered trademark and "The New Yorker Out Loud" is a trademark of The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.
All rights reserved.
www.mercuryrecords.com/mercury

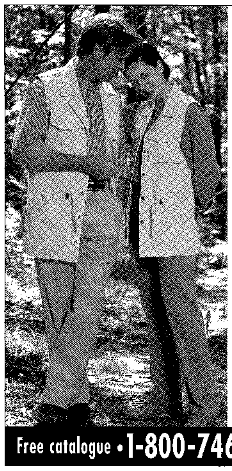
17 unusual journeys

10. 8 Days Inside English Country Gardens and Private Homes. $3,350.
4. The Great African Flying Safari: 15 Days Inside Kenya and Tanzania. $6,950.
7. Embarrassment of Riches: 14 Days Inside France. $6,750.
12. Insider's Tour of the Great Eastern European Capitals. 15 Days. $7,950.
11. Aboard the Royal Scotsman. Travel the Way It Used to Be. 5 Days. $4,150.
6. The Essential Tuscany. 8 Days. $3,350.

Tuscan village. Life inside a sixteenth century cubist painting.

R. Crusoe & Son

The other 11 journeys? Call toll free for our brochure 1-888-490-8048.



"The best travel clothing in the world"

Smart-looking, classically styled, comfortable, and *"endurable"* travel clothing.

SECRET *pockets,* SECURITY *pockets,* and *"Give 'em hell"* washing instructions.

Tilley Endurables

Free catalogue • 1-800-746-0411 • www.tilley.com

The Newsletter for People Who Love Paris

PARIS notes

To order call toll-free:
1-800-976-7749

current events, culture
history, restaurants
hotels, travel tips
$39 10x/yr

HOME FROM HOME in LONDON

Private Flats & Houses for Short Rentals
TOLL FREE: 1-800 748 9783
TEL: 011-44 171 584 8914 FAX: 823 8433
E-Mail: homefromhome@compuserve.com
Internet: www.homefromhome.co.uk

nie Driver. (Art Greenwich Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, and Ziegfeld.)

JACKIE BROWN—Despite the usual armory of guns and foul mouths, Quentin Tarantino's third movie marks a change in direction. Tarantino adapted the script from Elmore Leonard's novel "Rum Punch," and he's tuned straight into the Leonard wavelength, with its buzz of ambition and failure. The movie is set in the present but infected with seventies chic, and the halting attempts at intimacy—notably between Pam Grier and Robert Forster—are something wholly new to Tarantino. Also with Samuel L. Jackson, Robert De Niro, and Bridget Fonda.—*A.L.* (1/12/98) (Cinema 3rd Avenue, 84th Street Sixplex, Metro Cinema, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, and Park & 86th Street Cinemas. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; through Jan. 29. . . . ¶ Embassy 2; starting Jan. 30.)

THE KILLERS (1946)—Ernest Hemingway's short story about the man who doesn't try to escape his killers is acted out tensely and accurately, and, for once, the gangster-thriller material added to it is not just padding but is shrewdly conceived (by Anthony Veiller and the uncredited John Huston) to show why the man didn't care enough about life to run away. Under the expert direction of Robert Siodmak, Burt Lancaster gives his first screen performance (and is startlingly effective), and Siodmak also does wonders with Ava Gardner.—*P.K.* (Film Forum 2; Jan. 28-Feb. 1.)

KUNDUN—Martin Scorsese's examination of the early life of the Dalai Lama starts out like a magisterial John Ford Western, with a lone horseman crossing the parched plains of Tibet in search of the little boy who is the latest reincarnation of the Buddha of Compassion. Then it turns into a story of spiritual education, and, finally—as Mao's forces attack and the twenty-four-year-old must decide whether to stay and face certain murder or flee to India—into a drama of political conscience. The film is far too long, and viewers may be frustrated by its frequently shifting tone; yet, in a way, a shifting tone is just the right treatment for a religion that emphasizes serene detachment over emotion. Scorsese and his screenwriter, Melissa Mathison, are especially brave in handling their exotic subject without the plot crutch of a Western outsider to interpret everything for the audience. The director is inspired by the mandalas that the monks craft out of brightly colored sand, and, visually, this may be his richest feast since "Raging Bull."—*S.K.* (Chelsea Cinemas, Cinema II, Guild, Lincoln Square, and Village East Cinemas.)

LIVE FLESH—Half an hour into Pedro Almodóvar's new film and you're already up to your chin in blood and lust. The action starts in 1970, with a messy childbirth on a bus; twenty years later, the boy born that night, who has grown into an aimless youth called Victor (Liberto Rabal), lands himself in trouble over a junkie (Francesca Neri) and is accused of shooting a cop; later still, we find the junkie reformed and married to the cop (Javier Bardem), who is now in a wheelchair, and Victor coming out of prison to settle old scores. And so the farce spins on—played, as usual, with impassioned gravity, yet somehow bereft of the high spirits that used to grace the director's films. A sort of vivid despair seems to have settled over his characters, and the happy ending feels like wishful thinking. With Angela Molina and Penelope Cruz. In Spanish.—*A.L.* (1/26/98) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

OF HUMAN BONDAGE (1934)—Bette Davis had a great slouch in the role of Mildred, the scheming, deceitful Cockney waitress who sinks her hooks into the sensitive hero, Leslie Howard. Her peroxide-blond Mildred may be too showily *mean* to be convincing, but Davis's energy was, for the first time, fully released on the screen, and the role made her a star. John Cromwell directed this careful, rather stilted version of the Somerset Maugham novel. The other women in the hero's life are played by the lovely young Frances Dee and the unusual, wry Kay Johnson.—*P.K.* (A Different Light Bookstore; Feb. 1.)

OSCAR AND LUCINDA—The title of Gillian Armstrong's politely beautiful version of the Peter Carey novel refers to a pair of eccentric Victorians, the saintly Oscar (Ralph Fiennes) and the wealthy Lucinda (Cate Blanchett), who share vivid red hair and a weakness for gambling but never a bed. The theme of narrowly avoided love may have a certain delicacy on the page, but it leaves the film looking aimless; the movie may be lovely, but it doesn't play to Armstrong's strengths.—*A.L.* (1/12/98) (Angelika Film Center, Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, and 72nd Street East.)

SPICE WORLD—And you thought the art movie was dead. This one is a showcase for the Spice Girls—Scary, Sporty, Ginger, Baby, and Posh—and their songs. Opinions vary as to precisely how long it took to devise the plot; generous estimates put it at fifteen minutes. The Girls buzz around London in a big bus, and there are occasional dream sequences and innumerable meetings with celebrities, few of whom will be recognized by American audiences. The director is Bob Spiers, though it's hard to judge whether he actually turned up on the set. High marks, as ever, to the Spice Girls themselves for sheer nerve, and especially to Posh, who, when she opens her mouth, reveals herself to be about as posh as the Artful Dodger.—*A.L.* (1/26/98) (Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

SWEPT FROM THE SEA—An adaptation of Joseph Conrad's short story "Amy Foster," about a young English servant girl (Rachel Weisz) and a mys-

THEATRE ADDRESSES

•

(For show times, call 777-FILM, except where noted.)

ANGELIKA FILM CENTER, 18 W. Houston St.
ART GREENWICH TWIN, Greenwich Ave. at 12th St.
ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at Broadway.
BEEKMAN, Second Ave. at 66th St.
CHELSEA CINEMAS, 260 W. 23rd St.
CHELSEA WEST, 333 W. 23rd St.
CINEMA I, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA II, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA 3RD AVENUE, Third Ave. at 60th St.
CINEMA VILLAGE, 22 E. 12th St.
CORONET CINEMAS, Third Ave. at 59th St.
CRITERION CENTER, Broadway at 44th St.
EAST 85TH STREET, First Ave. at 85th St.
EASTSIDE PLAYHOUSE, Third Ave. at 55th St.
84TH STREET SIXPLEX, Broadway at 84th St.
86TH STREET EAST TWIN, Third Ave. at 86th St.
EMBASSY 1, 2, AND 3, Seventh Ave. at 47th St.
59TH STREET EAST CINEMA, 239 E. 59th St.
FILM FORUM, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110).
FIRST & 62ND CINEMAS, 400 E. 62nd St.
GOTHAM CINEMA, Third Ave. at 58th St.
GUILD, 33 W. 50th St.
LINCOLN PLAZA CINEMAS, Broadway at 63rd St.
LINCOLN SQUARE, Broadway at 68th St.
METRO CINEMA 1 AND 2, Broadway at 99th St.
MURRAY HILL CINEMAS, 160 E. 34th St.
NEW YORK TWIN, Second Ave. at 67th St.
19TH STREET EAST 6, Broadway at 19th St.
OLYMPIA I AND II, Broadway at 107th St.
ORPHEUM VII, Third Ave. at 86th St.
PARIS, 4 W. 58th St. (688-3800).
PARK & 86TH STREET CINEMAS, 125 E. 86th St.
QUAD CINEMA, 34 W. 13th St.
REGENCY, Broadway at 67th St.
THE SCREENING ROOM, 54 Varick St. (334-2100).
62ND & BROADWAY, 62 W. 62nd St.
64TH AND 2ND, Second Ave. at 64th St.
72ND STREET EAST, Third Ave. at 71st St.
STATE, Broadway at 45th St.
SUTTON 1 AND 2, Third Ave. at 57th St.
34TH STREET SHOWPLACE, 238 E. 34th St.
VILLAGE EAST CINEMAS, Second Ave. at 12th St.
VILLAGE THEATRE VII, Third Ave. at 11th St.
WAVERLY 1 AND 2, Sixth Ave. at 3rd St.
WORLDWIDE CINEMAS, 50th St. between Eighth and Ninth Aves.
ZIEGFELD, 141 W. 54th St.

terious stranger (Vincent Perez). Directed by Beeban Kidron. (Lincoln Square, 64th and 2nd, and Village East Cinemas.)

This Gun for Hire (1942)—Glossily amusing Paramount version of the Graham Greene spy-intrigue thriller "A Gun for Sale"; the film's sentimentality has a satisfying underlayer of perversity. Alan Ladd is the nervous, gentle, and sensitive gunman without a trace of human kindliness; what heart he has he gives to the care of sad cats, mongrels, and such. Laird Cregar is the sinister, stout villain with fussy habits; the proprietor of a night club, he hires Veronica Lake to entertain the patrons. This was Veronica Lake's first big starring role, and she is the most stylized character of all. Her face is so impeccably blank that when she smiles, as she does perhaps twice in the film, hearts can be heard to break—smack—in the theatre. With Robert Preston, Tully Marshall, Marc Lawrence, and Mikhail Rasummy. Directed by Frank Tuttle; adapted by Albert Maltz and W. R. Burnett.—*P.K.* (Film Forum 2; Feb. 3-4.)

Titanic—At well over three hours, James Cameron's grand new picture has plenty of romance to get through before it breaks the vessel in half. Leonardo DiCaprio plays the freewheeling Jack, who wins a steerage ticket and finds himself falling for the wealthy Rose (Kate Winslet), to the disapproval of her mother (Frances Fisher) and her brute of a fiancé (Billy Zane). The social animus of the story, like its imaginative majesty, is Dickensian; this all feels like two hundred million dollars well spent.—*A.L.* (12/15/97) (Astor Plaza, Chelsea Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Lincoln Square, Olympia, Orpheum VII, 34th Street Showplace, and Village Theatre VII.)

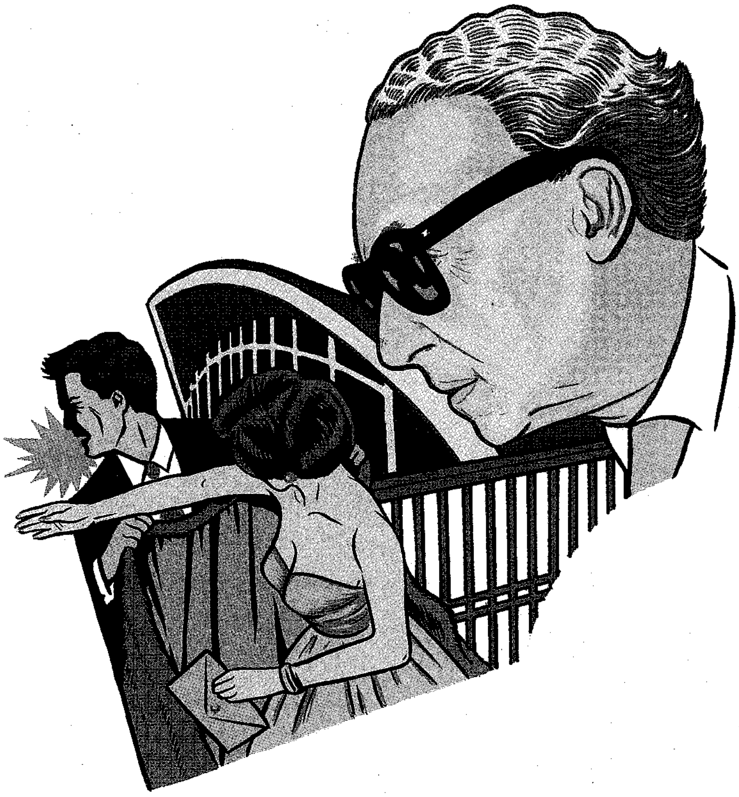
Tomorrow Never Dies—A game attempt by director Roger Spottiswoode to wring a little more life out of the James Bond series. The most enviable of 007's new toys is a remote-controlled B.M.W. that you drive with a small keypad; Pierce Brosnan, who plays Bond (for the second time), appears to be operated by the same mechanism. Also present are Jonathan Pryce (as a media tyrant), Teri Hatcher (as his doomed wife), and, most entertaining of all, Michelle Yeoh, who does stuff with her heels and elbows that 007 wouldn't dream of trying without a silencer.—*A.L.* (Chelsea West, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, First & 62nd Cinemas, Olympia, Orpheum VII, and Village Theatre VII.)

Wag the Dog—Barry Levinson's very savvy comedy about a very insider subject, the politics of spin control, from a screenplay by David Mamet and Hilary Henkin. The premise, conceived with a shrewd awareness that there's no audience quite so lemminglike as one composed of cynical urban sophisticates, involves a Presidential incumbent caught in a sex scandal less than two weeks before Election Day. Robert De Niro plays a Machiavellian spinmeister who devises a fake war and hires a Hollywood producer (Dustin Hoffman) to orchestrate it. The movie is essentially one long joke about the American way of hype: it's very clever, but its tone of gleeful sendup never takes you beyond what you already know.—*D.M.* (1/5/98) (Cinema I, Lincoln Square, Murray Hill Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Orpheum VII, State, and Village Theatre VII.)

The Winter Guest—In a small, frozen-over coastal town in Scotland, a mother and daughter (played by Emma Thompson and her real mother, Phyllida Law) spend a day together arguing and chatting, going from mutual exasperation to sudden bouts of fierce affection. The film is a character study imbued with the tender realism of a William Trevor story, and its slow, watchful quality makes everything seem worth paying attention to: the wonderful, washed-out colors of the town, the mournful cawing of seagulls, the pair of elderly women who follow funerals. Directed, with a great calmness of focus, by the actor Alan Rickman, and featuring superb performances by both mother and daughter, this picture has the lingering radiance of art.—*D.M.* (1/5/98) (Paris.)

ALSO PLAYING

boogie nights (reviewed in our issue of 10/13/97): Eastside Playhouse.... **devil's advocate:** Worldwide Cinemas.... **the dress:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas .... **eve's bayou:** Worldwide Cinemas .... **fallen angels:** Film Forum.... **full speed:** Quad Cinema.... **half baked:** Chelsea Cinemas, Criterion Center, Lincoln Square, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, and Village East Cinemas.... **the ice storm** (9/29/97): Quad Cinema.... **i know what you did last summer:** Worldwide Cinemas.... **illtown:** Village East Cinemas.... **l.a. confidential** (9/22/97): Art Greenwich Twin, Lincoln Square, and New York Twin.... **ma vie en rose:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Quad Cinema.... **mousehunt:** Chelsea Cinemas and 64th and 2nd.... **one night stand:** Worldwide Cinemas.... **phantoms:** Chelsea Cinema, Criterion Center, 84th Street Sixplex, 86th Street East Twin, Gotham Cinema, and Village East Cinemas.... **scream 2:** 86th Street East Twin and State.... **slappy and the stinkers:** Criterion Center and Waverly.... **star kid:** Criterion Center and 86th Street East Twin.... **starship troopers:** Worldwide Cinemas.... **the sweet hereafter** (11/24/97): Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.... **the tango lesson:** Worldwide Cinemas.... **welcome to sarajevo** (12/1/97): 62nd and Broadway.... **the wings of the dove** (11/10/97): 59th Street East Cinema.



Opening on January 31, at the American Museum of the Moving Image, a five-week retrospective of films directed by Douglas Sirk.

MARK ZINGARELLI

REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2 and 3, W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (727-8110)—**theatre 2:** Jan. 28-Feb. 1: "Double Indemnity" (1944, Billy Wilder) and "The Killers" (†).... Feb. 2: "West Point" (1927, Edward Sedgwick) and "Just a Gigolo" (1931, Jack Conway), both with William Haines.... Feb. 3-4: "This Gun for Hire" (†) and "The Blue Dahlia" (1948, George Marshall).... **theatre 3:** "Don't Look Back" (1967, D. A. Pennebaker).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—Jan. 29 at 2:30: "The Poor Little Rich Girl" (1917, Maurice Tourneur; silent) and "The Little Princess" (1917, Marshall Neilan; silent).... Jan. 29 at 6: "When a Man Loves" (1927, Alan Crosland; silent).... Jan. 29 at 6:30 and Jan. 30 at 3: "Six O'Clock News" (1997, Ross McElwee).... Jan. 30 at 2:30: "Don Juan" (1926, Crosland; silent).... Jan. 30 at 6: "The Son of the Sheik" (1926, George Fitzmaurice; silent).... Jan. 30 at 6 and 8, Jan. 31 at 2:30 and 5, and Feb. 1 at 1 and 3: Six different programs of animated short films by Faith, Emily, and/or John Hubley.... Jan. 30 at 8: "A Woman of Affairs" (1929, Clarence Brown).... Jan. 31 at 2: "Ben-Hur" (1926, Fred Niblo; silent).... Jan. 31 at 5: "Lazybones" (1925, Frank Borzage; silent).... Feb. 1 at 2: "Male and Female" (1919, Cecil B. De Mille; silent).... Feb. 1 at 5: "His Picture in the Papers" (1916, John Emerson; silent) and "Down to Earth" (1917, Emerson; silent).... Feb. 2 at 2:30: "Stella Maris" (1918, Neilan; silent) and "The Toll of the Sea" (1922, Chester Franklin; silent).... Feb. 2 at 6: "Too Wise Wives" (1921, Lois Weber; silent).... Feb. 3 at 2:30: "The Love Light" (1921, Frances Marion; silent).... Feb. 3 at 6: "Joanna Enlists" (1918, William D. Taylor; silent) and "On Dangerous Ground" (1917, William Brady; silent).

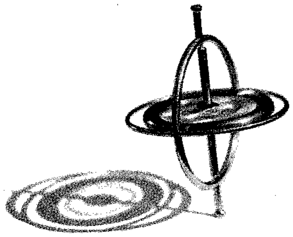
Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center (875-5600)—A program of Hungarian films; in Hungarian, with English subtitles. Jan. 28 at 2 and 6:15 and Jan. 29 at 4: "Somewhere in Europe" (1947, Geza Radványi).... Jan. 28 at 4:10 and 8:20 and Jan. 29 at 8:15: "Merry-Go-Round" (1953, Zoltán Fábri).... Jan. 29 at 2 and 6:15: "State Department Store" (1952, Viktor Gertler).... Jan. 30 at 2 and 6:15: "The Round-Up" (1965, Miklós Jancsó).... Jan. 30 at 4 and 8:15 and Jan. 31 at 6: "The Age of Daydreaming" (1964, István Szabó).... Jan. 31 at 4 and Feb. 1 at 9: "Professor Hannibal" (1956, Fábri).... Jan. 31 at 8:15 and Feb. 1 at 7: "House Under the Rocks" (1958, Károly Makk).... Feb. 1 at 2 and Feb. 2 at 9:10: "Ten Thousand Suns" (1967, Ferenc Kosa).... Feb. 1 at 5: "Aphrodite" (1918, Alfred Deesy).... Feb. 2 at 2 and 7:15: "Land of Angels" (1962, György Revesz).... Feb. 3 at 2: "Skylark" (1963, László Ranody).... Feb. 3 at 4: "Current" (1963, István Gaál).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—A program of films directed by Douglas Sirk. Jan. 31 at 2: "Summer Storm" (1944).... Jan. 31 at 4: "La Habanera" (1937).... Feb. 1 at 2: "Shockproof" (1949).... Feb. 1 at 4: "A Scandal in Paris" (1945).

Museum of Television and Radio, 25 W. 52nd St. (621-6800)—From Feb. 1: "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pitman" (†).

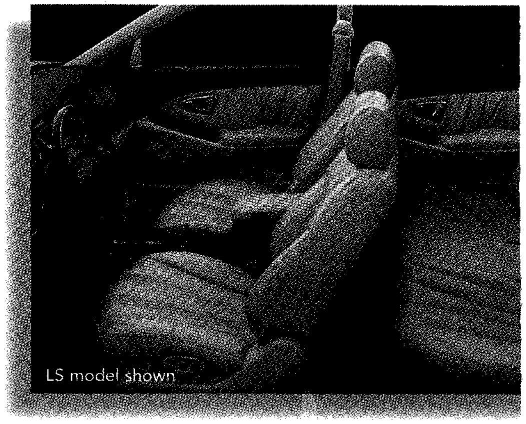
A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St.—A Sunday-night series of free films. On Feb. 1 at 7, the feature will be "Of Human Bondage" (†).

Glenn Nugent loves the performance of his racing sloop. And when it comes to traveling on terra firma, he also likes high performance. So naturally, he drives a Diamante LS. You see, Nugent is passionate about sailing, but on land, he has absolutely no interest in driving a boat.



A big multi-adjustable seat holds you, while big speed-rated tires hold the road. It's just one of the ways a Diamante balances equal measures of luxury and performance.

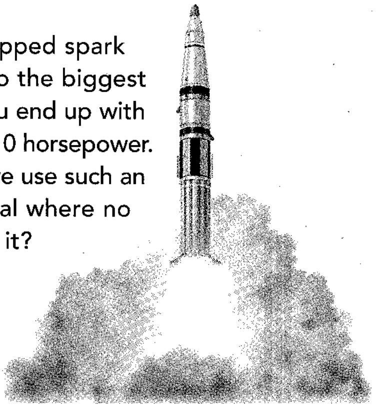
A Diamante is equipped with layers of sound-deadening material and foam insulation that's injected into the roof. Settle into the lush interior and you won't notice any insulation. But then again, you won't notice any noise.



LS model shown

It's smooth, sophisticated and inlaid with platinum. And that's just the engine.

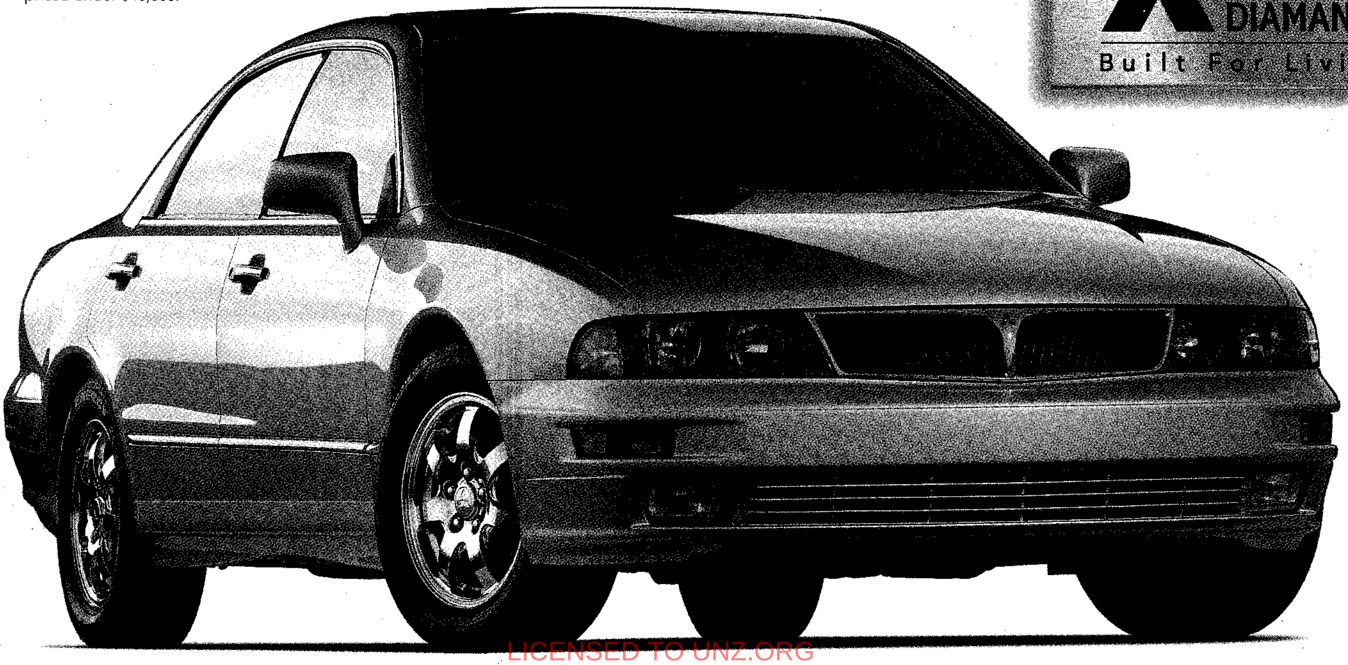
When platinum-tipped spark plugs are fitted to the biggest V6 in its class,* you end up with an eye-opening 210 horsepower. Why else would we use such an expensive material where no one will ever see it?



What kind of luxury sedan would you expect from a company that builds 320-horsepower sports cars and world-renowned sport utility vehicles? You would expect a premium sedan that's sleek, powerful and well made. And you'd be right. Interested in more information? Call us at 1-800-55MITSU. Or come visit our web site at www.mitsucars.com

Diamante ES starts at $27,650. Diamante LS, shown with optional equipment, MSRP $36,537 plus $470 destination/handling (Alaska $590). Excludes tax, title, license, registration fee, dealer options and charges. Prices and vehicle availability may vary. Actual prices set by dealers. *Class includes import near-luxury sedans priced under $40,000.

MITSUBISHI DIAMANTE
Built For Living



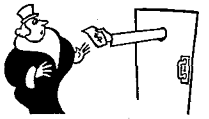
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

A MIDWINTER NIGHT'S SEX COMEDY

DEPT. OF ACCOMPLICES

A visit with the mystery woman who started the scandal ball rolling.



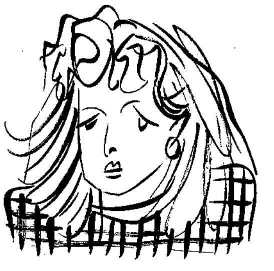
It was the received wisdom in Washington last week that the current Clinton scandal is one for which the President has only himself to blame. In the cases of Whitewater, Travelgate, and Filegate, and even Paula Jones, so the thinking goes, the President could point to political enemies or inept staff. Not this time. If the allegations prove true, he has got into this fix by himself.

Well, maybe not *all* by himself. A smoky-voiced New Yorker named Lucianne Goldberg, who resembles a somewhat seasoned Bond girl, is proud to let it be known that in the matter of his political immolation Bill Clinton has had some expert help from her. Over Diet Cokes in her spacious, smoke-filled West Side apartment last week, Goldberg described how she persuaded her friend Linda Tripp, a former White House aide, to secretly tape-record her conversations with Monica Lewinsky—conversations in which Lewinsky graphically described her purported affair with the President. Goldberg also claims to be one of the people who advised Tripp to take the tapes to Kenneth Starr, the Whitewater Independent Counsel. And, until last Friday, when F.B.I. agents arrived at her door, she had two of the original tapes in her possession.

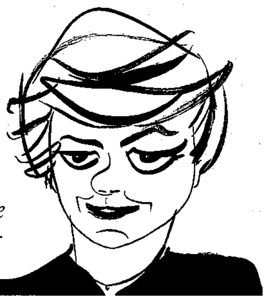
ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

By profession, Lucianne Goldberg is a ghostwriter (she did Maureen Dean's book "Washington Wives"); an author of novels that have been characterized by one reviewer as "lightly amoral entertainment"; and a literary agent, whose clients tend to be politically incendiary. But to define her by her work would be a mistake. Over the past three decades she has become an impresario of high-level political intrigue—a tough-talking blonde whose far-fetched role in the current Clinton scandal may well outdo any plot she could concoct.

"I'm not going to say that I did this because I'm some great Christian," Goldberg said, explaining why she got involved with Linda Tripp and the President's relationship problems. "I did it because it's fucking fascinating! I love dish! I live for dish!" Listening to Goldberg describe her past involvement in some of the more shadowy reaches of the right-wing political scene, though, it's hard not to imagine some partisan motive as well. A political conservative, Goldberg confirms that she worked as a spy for the Nixon White House, impersonating a reporter on George McGovern's press plane. She says that it was her friend Victor Lasky, the author of a scathing 1963 book about John F. Kennedy, who put her up to it, thereby saving her from the stultification of housewifehood. At the time, she was young and, as she has said on more than one occasion, "busty," and she had no trouble pretending to write for a made-up news organization—"the Women's News Agency or something." Her seatmate was Hunter S. Thompson. "I just talked into a telephone every night," she says, with a laugh, of her early role as a dirty trickster. "I was just winging it. Telling 'em who was sleeping with the stewardesses." Goldberg herself has been romantically linked with L.B.J., for whom she worked in the sixties. Asked about the rumor, she denies it firmly, joking, "I had better taste than that."



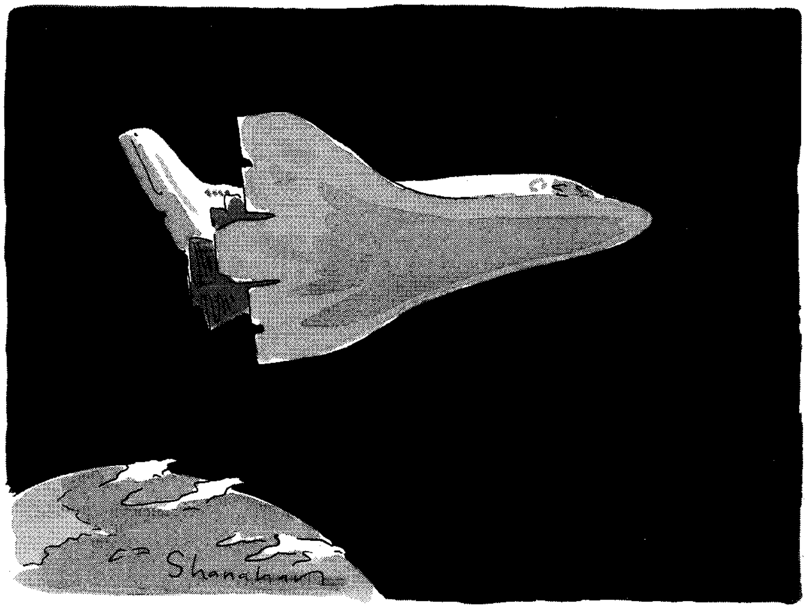
Linda Tripp



Lucianne Goldberg

After Nixon self-destructed, Goldberg continued to follow a course hostile to the Democratic Party, representing the books of numerous conservative authors, including Leo Damore's 1988 Chappaquiddick exposé, "Senatorial Privilege," and, more recently, a roman à clef by the Texas real-estate agent Dolly Kyle Browning, about her youthful romance with the future President. But Goldberg is no ordinary ideologue. She is not so much a true believer as a political thrill seeker and provocateur. In the nineteen-seventies, she and a friend lampooned the feminist movement by founding what they called the Pussycat League, whose motto was "The lamb chop is mightier than the karate chop." Of the heady publicity that attended this stunt, Goldberg says, "I learned that media circuses are fun." She adds, "One of my goals in life is to stay unbored. I'm terrified of being bored!"

Late last week, boredom seemed safely at bay. After Goldberg's name appeared in a newspaper story about Linda Tripp, and word got around that she had two of Tripp's tapes, the phone in her clubby, plaid-upholstered den rang constantly. Her twenty-eight-year-old son, Jonah, took the calls, and burst in on his mother every few minutes with a new bulletin: The British tabloids were offering "buckets of money" for the tapes! Jerry Oppenheimer, an editor for the *National Enquirer,* was parked downstairs and calling from his car phone to say that he could beat an offer of $750,000: "We'll go much higher"! Tom Brokaw called! CBS radio also wanted the tapes!—for free, alas. Give away something after she'd turned down three-quarters of a million dollars? "That would," Goldberg said, with a throaty cackle, "be Polish negotiating!"



"You can turn your blinker off now, Senator."

THE worst of times for Bill Clinton, it seems, are the best of times for Lucianne Goldberg. Between drags on her cigarette, Goldberg described her experience of the escalating scandal. "It's like someone gives you this wonderful hot-fudge sundae—and every day they keep putting a candy violet on top!"

The tale of how Lucianne Goldberg ended up in the middle of this story began more than four years ago. It was then, in late 1993, Goldberg says, that she was first given Linda Tripp's name by a mutual, ideologically aligned friend—the Fox News talk-show host and conservative columnist Tony Snow. At the time, Goldberg was looking for sources to help a prospective author write a book about Vincent Foster's death, a book that clearly would have targeted the Clintons. She won't name the author, but says that among those she tried to sign up for the project was Mark Fuhrman, the former L.A.P.D. detective who was disgraced for his racist language in the O. J. Simpson murder trial, and who went on to write a best-seller, "Murder in Brentwood," which Goldberg represented. Snow suggested that Tripp might make an excellent source. Snow described Tripp, Goldberg says, as "a terrific gal": a Bush Administration holdover and one of the last people to see Foster alive, since she worked as an aide in his office.

Robert Bennett

Goldberg says that she and Tripp struck up an immediate friendship. Tripp, it turned out, was a huge fan of Mark Fuhrman's—"a Moonie for him," according to Goldberg. And Goldberg liked the "red-white-and-blue reverence" that Tripp felt for the institution of the Presidency. Tripp, Goldberg says, "was heartsick about this crowd that had taken over the White House. The carpets were getting dirty. People were eating at their desks. The White House was the most glamorous thing that had ever happened to Linda, and then she sees this mob come in, in sandals . . . she sees George Stephanopoulos slopping peanut butter on crackers, with his feet on the desk and his dirty hair." Moreover, Tripp was angry that a friend of hers, a young White House usher from the Bush Administration, had been fired by the Clintons on suspicion of disloyalty.

Goldberg says she dislikes Clinton, "more for emotional reasons" than for ideological ones. She was brought up in an upper-middle-class family in Alexandria, Virginia, the daughter of a doctor and a physicist. "Bill Clinton was just like the boys that used to drive down King Street in pink convertibles, catcalling about our breasts," says Goldberg, who attended private school. "We were told to stay away from those boys, that they were trash. But we always had crushes on them. They were smooth operators, and they lied." Goldberg recalls that when she heard how, on their first morning in the White House, Hillary had turned to her husband and just started laughing, "I said, 'Oh, shit! Bonnie and Clyde are in charge!' "

Goldberg didn't succeed in launching a Vince Foster book. But soon she and Tripp were weighing the possibility of Tripp's writing her own White House book. Goldberg downplays the project now, saying that Tripp's first efforts were too poorly written to shop around to prospective publishers. But Tripp's lawyer, James Moody, who describes Goldberg as a "spinner of tales," said that he has a "treatment" for the book, titled, "Behind Closed Doors: What I Saw Inside the Clinton White House." Some proposed chapter headings were "Shock Therapy: My Introduction to the Mores and Manners of the Clinton White House," "Mrs. President," and "The President's Women."

How much Tripp actually knew about these women became a matter of public dispute last summer, when her name surfaced in a *Newsweek* article suggesting that Clinton had fondled a campaign volunteer named Kathleen Willey. The magazine named Tripp as the source who had seen Willey leave the President's office, lipstick smeared and clothing askew, yet Tripp later told reporters that Willey had made no claim about having been sexually harassed—a comment she reportedly thought was helpful to the President.

According to Goldberg, it was the Clinton camp's reaction to the Willey story that sparked Tripp's vendetta. The President's personal attorney, Robert Bennett, told a reporter that Tripp "is not to be believed." That remark put Tripp in a "cold fury," Goldberg says. "Bennett's mouth has gotten this President in the trouble he's in now. There's a level of misogyny here that's shocking. It's Trash the Women! First you use the women, then when they get pissed you trash them." (Bennett calls her charge "preposterous." "I'd talked with others who told me Tripp is a nutcake," he says. "Because of that she decides to wear a wire for Ken Starr?")

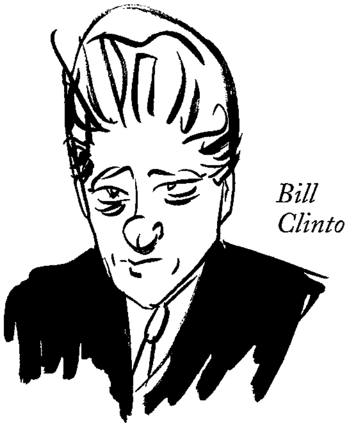
GOLDBERG, who had been out of touch with Tripp for several months, heard from her again just after the Willey contretemps and went to Washington to see her in October. Tripp, now working at the Pentagon, told Goldberg that Monica Lewinsky, a young co-worker from her days at the White House and a dear friend, had been confiding in her about what she claimed was a long affair with the President. Goldberg recalls that Tripp told her, "I've got a problem . . . I know there's going to be a firestorm sooner or later, and Isikoff"—Michael Isikoff, the *Newsweek* reporter on the Clinton "bimbo beat," who had met Tripp during the Willey story—"has been on my case." Tripp was afraid that she was going to be subpoenaed, Goldberg says, and asked for her help: "How can I protect myself and maintain my credibility if the President's lawyer is on TV calling me a liar?"

Goldberg downplays the idea that, from the start, she saw Tripp's story mainly as a sensational book. At one point in our conversations, however, she acknowledged, "I have a firehouse mentality. When a bell goes off, I want to run. . . . I see everything as a possible book. . . . I'm nothing but a salesman. I don't pretend to be anything else."

In this case, however, Goldberg wasn't selling a project based on a scandal—she was helping to mastermind the scandal itself. First, she warned Tripp that if she wanted to go to the media with her story it had to be "bulletproof." How, she asked, are you going to prove this? Goldberg says that she advised Tripp to start surreptitiously taping her conversations with Lewinsky, sending her to Radio Shack to buy a tape recorder. To overcome Tripp's initial reluctance, Goldberg says, she told Tripp, "Desperate times call for desperate measures!"

But Goldberg says that she didn't realize that taping a phone conversation in the state of Maryland, where Tripp lives, is illegal without the consent of both parties. This infraction, according to Goldberg, eventually prompted Tripp to make a deal with Kenneth Starr. When Tripp realized she had done something illegal, Goldberg says, she was "terrified": "Linda's the type who, if she tore a label off of a mattress, she'd shake all day."

Meanwhile, the secret taping was painfully time-consuming for Tripp. Goldberg says that she believed that Lewinsky was more and more distraught at being thrown over by Clinton, and Tripp told her that she sometimes got calls from her friend twenty times a day. The two women spent hours on the phone, and the details of Lewinsky's heartbreak are interspersed, over more than twenty hours of tape, with talk about shopping and having their hair streaked. According to Goldberg, who has heard only some of the tapes, Lewinsky told Tripp she wasn't going to count the President as one of the men she had "slept with," because over their eighteen-month liaison there had been no penetration, just oral sex. Lewinsky said that she believed that this didn't constitute "having sex." She also told Tripp that she had a cherished memento of the affair hanging in her closet—a black cocktail dress stained with the President's semen, which she said she would never send to the dry cleaner's. Goldberg says that Lewinsky detailed a somewhat pathetic list of gifts she had received from Clinton: a hat pin, which she wore on her lapel; a caftanlike dress that he had picked up on a foreign trip; and a book, Walt Whitman's "Leaves of Grass."

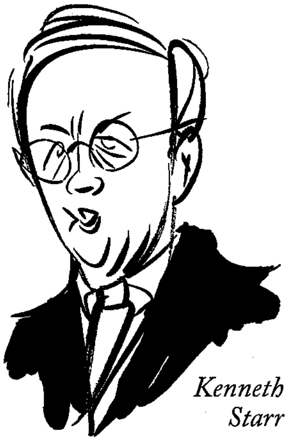


Bill Clinton

"The kid was madly in love with Clinton," Goldberg says. "But she was increasingly miserable. And you know how it is when a girlfriend is being treated badly by a man. She had been FedExing him love letters from the Watergate. . . . One time, she stood out at night, in the cold, at the White House gate, and she stood there for an hour and finally they let her in." Goldberg recalls, "Tripp was furious. It was like she was gonna see her own daughter die."

AT the same time that Tripp was taping her phone conversations with Lewinsky, she was also still in touch with the *Newsweek* reporter, Michael Isikoff, according to Goldberg, who says that she once met with them in the Washington apartment of her son Jonah. It was at this meeting, in October, Goldberg says, that Tripp gave her two of the tapes. Last Friday, the F.B.I. took these tapes from Goldberg's apartment, though she says she has given copies of them to her lawyer.

About two weeks ago, Tripp told Goldberg that she believed she'd finally made a tape that might prove seriously incriminating to Clinton. On this tape, Goldberg says, Lewinsky tells of being instructed to lie about her affair with Clinton in her sworn statements in the Paula Jones case. Both Lewinsky and Tripp had been subpoenaed by Jones's lawyers, and both were, according to Goldberg, "completely freaked out about it." Goldberg says that she warned her friend, "You gotta off-load these tapes." She says she was afraid that "someone would kick in the door" and get them. She advised her friend to take all the tapes to Tripp's lawyer, Kirby Behre, which she did. But Tripp was beginning to become uncomfortable with her lawyer, who had been referred to her by the Clinton camp. She told Goldberg that she had asked Behre to help her get a tiny tape recorder that she could wear, to tape Lewinsky in person. But, according to Goldberg, the attorney refused to help her with this project. When Tripp played the tape for him in which Lewinsky talked about being instructed to lie, Behre "freaked out," Goldberg claims. In her rendition, which could have come right out of one of her pulpy novels, Behre said, "Holy shit, this is it! I'm calling [Bob] Bennett . . . I'm going to tell him that it's over. This is a freight train, and it's headed right at the President." This version of events elicited a laugh of disbelief from Kirby Behre, who refused to breach attorney-client privilege to talk about Tripp but did say that "approximately ten days ago Linda Tripp became a former client."


Kenneth Starr

Goldberg says that Tripp decided to fire Behre and, with her help, found a new attorney, James Moody, who promptly retrieved the tapes from Behre. Moody suggested that Tripp solve her illegal-taping problem by seeking Starr's help to obtain immunity. (Moody says Tripp already had a "comfort zone" with the Independent Counsel's office, having made the acquaintance of its staff earlier during the Whitewater investigation.) Goldberg says that she, too, urged Tripp to go to Starr.

When Tripp called the Independent Counsel's office on January 12th, the prosecutors told Tripp not to move from her home. Within the hour, three prosecutors and an F.B.I. agent were sitting in her living room. "They moved with snakelike speed," Goldberg says, with a gleam in her eye.

The prosecutors questioned Tripp extensively about her relationship with Goldberg. Tripp told them that she was a friend. The agents wanted to know whether Tripp was planning to write a book, Goldberg says; Tripp insisted that she was doing no such thing.

Does that mean that she never will?

"I'm not promising in the future," says Goldberg, with a throaty laugh. "I'd love to have a book out of her. But I think it's going to be a long time before she's free to write one. And I might take a year off, and write it myself. If it happens," she says, with a world-weary smile, "goody, goody. If it doesn't, goody, goody."

—JANE MAYER

THE LYRICAL PRESS

Caution: Journalists at work.

THE following letter was E-mailed late last week to fifty-one of Monica Lewinsky's classmates from Lewis and Clark College:

"We at TIME Magazine would have preferred to call you about this matter, and where possible we have tried to find your number but without success. As you've no doubt heard by now, an explosive story about your schoolmate, Monica Lewinsky, has suddenly erupted in Washington. We are trying to put together the most rounded, most informative and fairest piece possible about Monica, and are looking for people who know or knew her who are willing to share their memories of her. We in the picture department are also looking for pictures of her to help illustrate the articles.

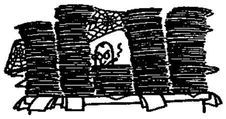
"We have all been caught off guard by the sudden shock of this story, and we appreciate that the first human impulse is to be protective. But if our story is to present a fuller picture of the people, and especially Monica, who are caught up in this vortex, we need the help of people who have the facts and background material.

"So please think about this a little. We would like to hear from you if you knew Monica. . . . We thank you for your help with this.

"Sincerely,
"Rick Boeth
"TIME Magazine"

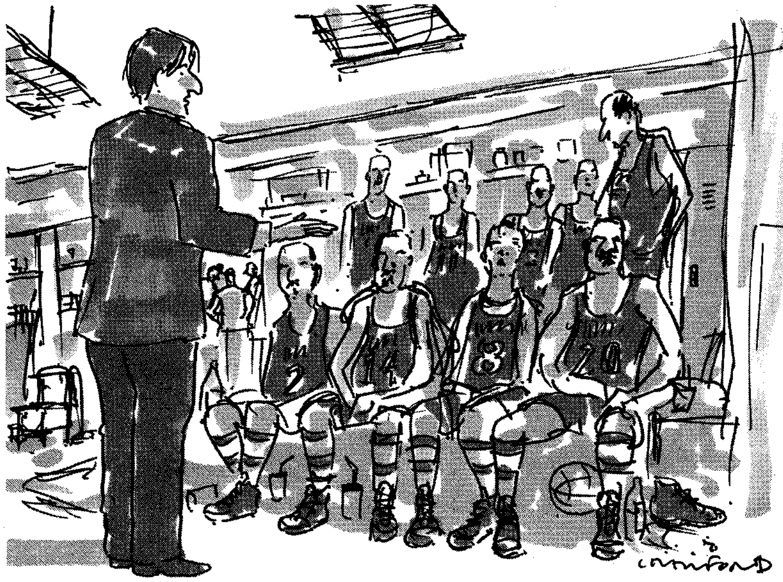
DAFFY DICTIONARY DEPT.

The phrase "burrowing in" has nothing to do with Groundhog Day.



THE current Clinton sex scandal is too new to have made much of a mark on the lexicon, but early signs are promising. The term "burrow in," for example. This seems to be what enabled Linda Tripp to remain in government service long enough to befriend Monica Lewinsky and wear a wire for Ken Starr's gumshoes. Burrowing in is what happens when a political appointee is quietly moved into a job that is normally a civil-service slot and is thereby protected from the purge that accompanies a transfer of power. It's an excellent way for a party that has just lost control of the White House to populate the bureaucracy with potential walking time bombs. On Capitol Hill, the analogous process has been known as "ramspecking," in honor of the Ramspeck Act of 1940, a just-expired law that allowed Presidents to put lame-duck congressional staffers in agency jobs. Once a person has burrowed in or has been ramspecked, he or she becomes a "headless nail." Try prying one of those out with the claw end of a hammer.

"Bimbo eruption" has put a lot of miles on the odometer during the last few days. This excellent term dates back to pre-Presidential days and is the coinage of Betsey Wright, a onetime chief of Clinton's gubernatorial staff. The current mess has a long way to go before it can hold a lexicographic candle to the mother of all scandals—the scandal that gave us "modified limited hangout," "twisting slowly, slowly in the wind," "Saturday Night Massacre," and more—but, again, it's early yet. Meanwhile, there is already one nonlinear link between Watergate and Whatevergate. (The stampede is on to fill in that blank. The tabloids have floated Sexgate, Fornigate, and Naughtygate, but neither William Safire nor Michael Kinsley has been heard from at this writing.) The link, of course, is "creep"—Ms. Lewinsky's alleged unaffectionate pet name for the Chief Executive, according



"And if you forget who you're covering I'll be on the sidelines, in Hugo Boss, ready to remind you."

to the alleged Tripp tapes. Put that word in small caps and it really brings back memories. Uncanny, isn't it? Downright CREEPy, in fact.

—NICKY DREW

MAY-DECEMBER DEPT.

Telling the victim from the victor in the Clinton-Lewinsky imbroglio.

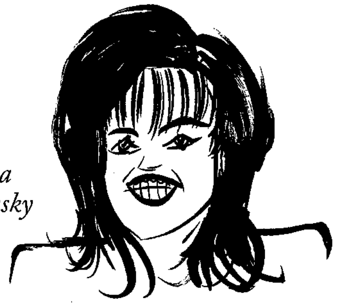
There are many flattering things a man may say to a woman in the process of courtship, but few quite so romantic as "I'll risk impeachment to sleep with you." It would be a rare young woman who could resist such a heartfelt endorsement of her charms, not to mention a chance to sleep with a man who is (a) the President and (b) a babe. It seems odd, then, that Monica Lewinsky, the twenty-four-year-old who may or may not have had an affair with President Clinton, is being portrayed as a victim.

Which of the two of them, first of all, had more to lose? Let us suppose for a moment that Lewinsky was so crass as to indulge in a cost-benefit analysis of a relationship with Clinton. On the benefit side, she might have imagined transforming herself from boring old Monica Lewinsky of Beverly Hills into a nineties Marilyn Monroe—not to mention the attractions of Clinton himself. Costs would have included risking a situation like the one she's in at present. But how was she to know that a friend of hers could be so transcendently bitchy as to tape their conversations? Even now, she always has the option of telling all and writing a book. How very different, though, an equivalent calculation looks for Clinton. On the plus side, he gets to fool around with a pretty woman young enough to be his daughter; but he risks, among other things, his marriage, Chelsea, and the Presidency of the United States.

According to some, Lewinsky is a victim because of her age. Witness, for instance, representative youth defender R. W. Apple writing in the *Times:* "In human terms, the fact that Ms. Lewinsky was an intern, just out of Lewis & Clark College, may be more costly to the President than his alleged dalliances with older women, some of shady background. Millions of American families have or have had college students who worked as interns in large organizations. The presumption has always been that they would be well looked after, not preyed upon, and so the tale purportedly told by Ms. Lewinsky to Ms. Tripp could send chills down the spine of many American parents."

The first thing that's peculiar about statements like this is the notion that a college graduate of twenty-one is an infant, and that internships amount to a kind of postgraduate child care. How depressing such a thought would probably have appeared to young Ms. Lewinsky upon her arrival in Washington! How demoralizing to think that four years of college—all those exams, all those résumés, all that babysitting in Portland—could make so little difference. Then again, regulations against consensual adult sex, such as rules forbidding relationships between professors and students or between managers and lower-level employees, all implicitly ascribe a kind of statutory infancy to the people they're supposed to protect—the idea being that there's something intrinsically dubious about sex between people who have different amounts of power, just as there is about sex between an adult and a child. (It's always been difficult to see why this idea doesn't lead to the proscription of sex altogether, but that's another question.)

But, even supposing that Ms. Lewinsky was indeed a veritable ingénue when she arrived at the White House, how unwise it would be to assume that because of her youth she would naturally be the one to suffer in an affair with an older man. Has "Lolita" taught us nothing? Is it so difficult to imagine how cruel even a sweet young thing could be in such a situation, used as she is to muscly young twenty-year-olds and blithely free from worries about grownup stuff like spouses and children and leading the free world? And, on the other hand, is it hard to picture how pathetic she might come to find a man in his fifties, with his potbelly and his nose hairs, risking everything he has to sleep with her?



Monica Lewinsky

—LARISSA MACFARQUHAR

FREE CATALOG

TEAK AND MAHOGANY OUTDOOR FURNITURE

PRECISION-CUT KITS OR FULLY ASSEMBLED

Hand crafted to last a lifetime. Chairs, tables, benches, porch swings, rockers, lounges, planters, umbrellas and trellises. Assembled or as precision-cut kits that are both easy and fun to put together.

WOOD CLASSICS
914·255·5651

Box 98Y0610 GARDINER, NY 12525

INSIGHT'S ADDED INSIGHT.

With its Pull-Out Map plus detailed walking tours and brash, often quirky text, Insight Pocket Guides afford added Insight on 100 world cities, sites, islands, resort regions. At your favorite bookstore.

INSIGHT GUIDES

Heart & Roses
Pendant
14k Gold $455
Sterling Silver $ 75
20" chain included
Satisfaction Guaranteed
1-800-235-0471
Visa, MC, AMEX S/H $5.75
ROGER NICHOLS studios
17 NW Irving Ave. • Bend, OR 97701
Velvet Box
Size
1-1/4" Tall

FEBRUARY, YOU ARE FABULOUS!
Enjoy New York City's finest hair salon and warm the winter with the fabulous you.
Julius Caruso
HAIR SALON
212-759-7574 • 22 East 62nd Street

EXQUISITE RAIN FOREST LOTS AWAIT YOUR JUNGLE DREAM HOME.
COSTA RICA
— La Pura Jungla Development Project —
for a free brochure call 800 730.6824
www.lapurajungla.com

Archaeological Tours
LED BY NOTED SCHOLARS
1998 TOURS: EGYPT; YEMEN; GUATEMALA; PAKISTAN; SYRIA & JORDAN, ISRAEL; SICILY & SO. ITALY; TUNISIA; WESTERN TURKEY; YANGTZE RIVER; EASTERN TURKEY; ETRUSCAN ITALY; COASTAL TURKEY; INDONESIA; PORTUGAL; CAVES & CASTLES; SILK ROAD OF CHINA; OASES OF THE W. DESERT; MOROCCO; ERITREA; KHMER KINGDOMS; NO. CHILE & EASTER ISLAND.
archaeological tours
271 Madison Ave., 904E, NY, NY 10016 (212) 986-3054

ANNALS OF POLITICS

IS SEX NECESSARY?

The hope in the White House is that the President will be saved by his other obsession.

BY DAVID REMNICK

IN September, 1991, Bill Clinton met with a small group of Democratic Party activists at the Quality Inn on New Jersey Avenue in Washington, D.C., to discuss, among other things, whether a man with a history of sexual adventure—that is, a man such as Bill Clinton—could win the White House. Among the advisers at that session was John Holum, a lawyer who had worked four years earlier on Gary Hart's final campaign—a campaign that had ended with the images of the good ship Monkey Business and a young woman "not his wife" seated on the Senator's lap. Hart had denied to Holum that he had been carrying on an affair with Donna Rice, and Holum, in turn, had gone out and loyally repeated that tale to the press. When the campaign collapsed and Hart retreated to his Elba in the foothills of the Rockies, Holum vowed that he would never be burned again. It was not easy for him to forgive Hart his recklessness, his betrayal of people who had believed in him and worked for him.

Clinton had talked many times about the Hart affair with his aides Betsey Wright, Dick Morris, and others. Morris once said that Clinton experienced "tremendous terror" while deciding whether to run; Wright, for her part, knew what Clinton's tendencies were, largely because she had been responsible for covering up for him in Arkansas. Now, at the Quality Inn, Clinton himself brought up the question of his marriage. He told Holum and the others, "I know you are all concerned about this. Here's the situation: there were problems in our marriage and we've worked them out." When I spoke to Holum several years ago, he said he was "thrilled" by Clinton's declaration that day and decided to work for his election.

Holum is now at the State Department, dealing with arms-control issues. When I called him the other day to discuss the allegations being levelled at the President, his voice softened; he did not want to talk about them. There are others in the White House who have spent the past days grimly soldiering on: Mike McCurry, the press secretary, and Rahm Emanuel, the adviser who sits just next door to the Oval Office, help the President craft his answers to all the obvious questions and then make sure there are no unwise elaborations on those answers.

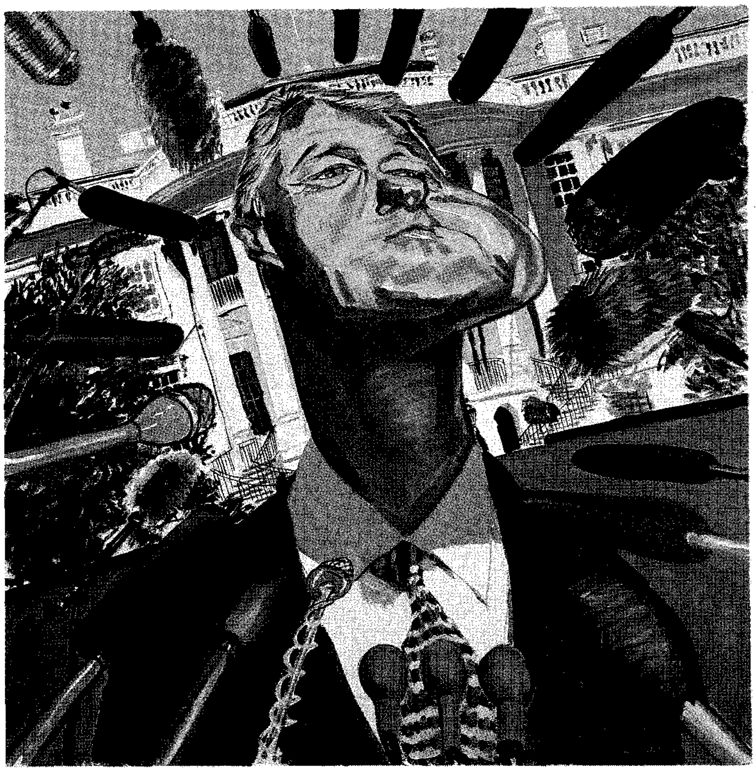
There are other aides in the White House and the Administration, men and women who have known the President for years, who have lived through countless mini-scandals, real and imagined, but who find they cannot dismiss this as another Filegate. They say that the atmosphere at the White House now is one of potential tragedy—and, what's most humiliating, perhaps, a tragedy colored by the sordid and the ridiculous. "Everyone who knows Clinton knows that he has an Achilles' heel and it's located in his groin," one of them told me. "Therefore the notion that he might have been getting some on the side strikes no one as fantasyland. If they were saying that he was taking money from Dwayne Andreas"—the chairman of Archer-Daniels-Midland—"they'd dismiss it out of hand. That's not Clinton. He's not in it for the money. . . . We're at a stage of denial. The problem is that what we're hearing sounds true, it smells true."

Vernon Jordan's presence at the center of the scandal made these White House aides especially nervous. John Podesta, the former staff secretary, used to be known around the West Wing as the Secretary of Shit, because he was so often charged with trying to dispose of such messes as Whitewater and Travelgate. Jordan, one source said, is "the off-the-books Secretary of Shit.

He's the guy on the outside who has to pick up after the elephant."

It did not require a psychic to read humiliation in Clinton's face as he sat with Jim Lehrer, of PBS, last week. Clinton is among the most self-conscious of Presidents. He reads Presidential biographies, consumes them the way he used to consume French fries; since his reëlection, he has not pretended to be above worrying about the judgment of historians. No Presidential adviser is foolish or vain enough to pretend to know the details of Clinton's marriage and personal life, but it is the President's very real obsession with history that gives them hope, even now.

"Bill Clinton is a smart guy who likes being President, and you'd think he wouldn't engage in such things, because he has to know it plays into the hands of the right wing, the Christian right, and it spoils his chance at history," one Administration source said. "If he blows it on this, he'll be remembered as 'the pussy President' and not 'the policy President.' . . . You figure he's learned something. He couldn't get away with it in Arkansas. Why would he get away with it in D.C.?"



"Sex, in this case, is not a metaphor for character—it's the main expression of it," Clinton's biographer says.

PHILIP BURKE

To follow the current scandal in Washington is to return to the nagging idea that the modern Presidency seems to require of its holders a degree of insanity. Not pathology, necessarily, but at least a sense of entitlement and moral free passage that few others would dare assign themselves. The recent publication of telephone transcripts, personal testimony, and other historical relics from the White Houses of Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon feature startling levels of recklessness and arrogance. Their sins are not the same in kind—Kennedy tended toward sexual idiocy and Nixon toward political vengeance, with Johnson somewhere in between—but they are comparable in degree. At the same time, it is precisely those Presidents who lack that element of entitlement and lordly expectation—Ford, Carter, and Bush—who are not taken entirely seriously. Ronald Reagan, in the history of modern Presidents, remains the most enigmatic, and awaits his definitive biographer.

We have come to know the flaws of Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon largely in retrospect. With them we have a posthumous intimacy. It took a while before the last vestiges of Presidential mystique yielded to the weight of transcripts and testimony. We have never known a President as well and as immediately as we feel we know Bill Clinton. In part, Clinton is a product of his time, the era of cyberspeed gossip and ubiquitous intimacy; in part, he has helped create that era—he is its avatar. In 1992, Clinton's understanding of the culture of politics as entertainment helped make him seem new and modern, and his opponent, George Bush, fussy and antique. In the name of openness and wide appeal, Clinton appeared on all the talk shows; he played the saxophone and took calls from Mike from Walla Walla. He answered questions about arms control and underwear, about downsizing government and his marriage. Just as he seemed to want to know all about our problems, our pain, he seemed to tell us everything about himself. As he waded into yet another town-hall meeting, wireless microphone in hand, he was an incarnation of Phil Donahue. He spoke of policy plainly and well. He also spoke fluently the language of therapy and self-esteem.

As a child of the sixties, Clinton implicitly adopted the theme introduced by the Students for a Democratic Society and popularized by feminists: the personal is political. Originally, that slogan was meant to show that everyday relationships can also be about power and inequality, and demand political rethinking. By the time Clinton ran for President, nearly all political discussion—and all political attacks—were personal.

"In 1994, I was teaching at Oxford, and Clinton was there to get an honorary degree," Eric Foner, a leading historian of the Civil War and Reconstruction, said. "I shook his hand, and we started talking about Presidents, and the next thing I know he said, 'I've been reading a lot about various Presidents, and I've been subjected to the greatest degree of vilification of anyone that I can think of.' "

Historians who have studied the vilification of, say, Lincoln or F.D.R. may disagree, but the political culture of Washington has changed utterly since the Nixon Presidency, with the institutionalization of a more or less permanent atmosphere of Presidential attack and general political warfare on the most personal level.

"Ever since Watergate, Presidents have been assumed guilty until proven innocent," the Presidential historian Michael Beschloss said. "Before Nixon, Presidents got the benefit of the doubt and therefore got to do things. Take Roosevelt in 1940-41, when he played fast and loose with the neutrality laws passed by Congress in his secret dealings and covert alliance with the British, and in Navy operations in the North Atlantic. In the current environment, those things would have been investigated zealously, and there might have been trouble. In retrospect, historians will say that if F.D.R. had not done these things we might not have been prepared after Pearl Harbor—that the ends justify the means."

The level of determination has only deepened. Watergate—from break-in to resignation—lasted twenty-six months. The Whitewater scandal, which has featured everything from rumors of murder to obstruction of justice, is approaching its seventh year. Thanks to the Supreme Court, Clinton is the first sitting President to have to defend himself against a civil suit, and that suit, an allegation of sexual harassment brought by Paula Jones, is leading to the diminishment, if not the unravelling, of Bill Clinton.

Who is pleased by this squalid spectacle? Who does it serve? Soon the culture will begin asking itself why these political structures of permanent investigation have developed and who, beyond the platoons of partisan players in the two political parties, actually desires them. It will ask who really wants a situation in which a special prosecutor is able to work in conjunction with Paula Jones's lawyers to help destroy a President. White House officials are not playing paranoid when they suggest that they have been pursued to the point of destruction since Election Day by a conglomeration of groups like the Christian-right Rutherford Institute. They also complain, not without reason, that some of the zeal of the Washington press is the result of a long news drought, in which hundreds of careers have languished.

And yet, if the charges are true, none of this will restore the Clinton Presidency. If Clinton were half as smart about Presidents and politics as he has always let on (and there is nothing as tiresome at this point as hearing a Clinton loyalist go on about the man's superhuman intelligence), it has to be counted as sheer stupidity, superhuman recklessness, for him to have ignored what he knew so well. But psychology, not an I.Q. score, will be needed to explain the behavior of a President who knows the enormous risks of a sexual interlude and takes them anyway. "The past is prologue with Clinton," his biographer, David Maraniss, said. "My conclusion is that, yes, as mind-boggling as it may seem, to be that reckless, to make it with a twenty-one-year-old intern, that's the whole point of the narcissism and the sense of invincibility built up over decades of surviving and having a protective cordon around you of aides and people to throw their bodies on anything that gets in the way. This is not uncommon in Presidents or politicians, but Clinton is the prototype. It's been true since the day he ran for Congress, in 1974, and aides were telling him he had to cut it out. Sex, in this case, is not a metaphor for character—it's the main expression of it."

THE highest realm of American public life now appears to summon no cultural echoes more elevated than the moist intersection of "Seven Days in May" and "Deep Throat." One clicks on CNN or MSNBC, one clicks on the Netscape icon to cruise from the Drudge Report to the Washington *Post* Web site and back again, all with the furtive thrill of a raincoated joe ducking into the last remaining peepshows on Times Square. This is surely the first time in the history of the republic when the news columns may soon feature sentences freighted equally with the words "President Clinton" and "semen-stained garment." We were faced, last Thursday, with Ted Koppel opening "Nightline" by informing his viewers that we would soon be hearing whether or not the President believes that oral sex counts as adulterous behavior. We now require parental guidelines before the news. Even the *Times*, which has been slow on the story and rather gingerly about the subject of sex in politics in general, is turning around: the stakes are that great.

The fall of regents is usually the stuff of high tragedy, and yet nowhere in Shakespeare is a king or queen threatened by loving too much, or indiscriminately. The king threatened most by loving, Henry VIII, simply gets rid of all the women. If there is a parallel, a shadow story, to the charges and rumors being levelled at Bill Clinton, it is Christopher Marlowe's "Edward II," a play of the late sixteenth century, in which a married king refuses to give up his lovers in a political culture that will not tolerate them. Edward loves not a summer intern but, rather, a beautiful young minion named Gaveston. The court opposes the relationship, not because it is homophobic but because it demands that the King outgrow such things and concentrate on his higher ambitions. "You have matters of more weight to think upon," one of the opponents complains. Later, the King is advised of his status beyond the Beltway:

> Libels are cast against thee in the street;
> Ballads and rhymes made of thy overthrow.

Even after the opposition does force out Gaveston, Edward is stupid enough to take up with another, a fellow named Spenser. Finally, Edward is murdered: his enemies smother him with a pillow and ream him most painfully with a hot poker.

One made a certain devil's bargain by voting for Clinton in the first place. It was unpleasant, on one level, to hear him deny Gennifer Flowers's story and yet know, really, that he was denying only some of its particulars. Unpleasant, most of all, because you felt complicit. The reward, if you liked at least some of Clinton's politics, was considerable: sensible policies on gun control, chemical weapons and nuclear non-proliferation, abortion, trade, big tobacco, the environment, economics. If only because the country has been prosperous and at peace, Clinton had a chance for a positive, if not a stellar, ranking in the Presidential-legacy sweepstakes. After Vietnam, Watergate, Reagan, and Bush, one thought, not a bad deal.

Bill Clinton does not have to leave office to be ruined. Just drifting along on the political waters for the next three years, a damaged punt always bailing, would trash not merely a legacy but also the earnest ambitions of those who came to Washington with him to do good. In 1929, James Thurber and E. B. White collaborated on a book titled, plaintively, "Is Sex Necessary?" Clinton's supporters now must be asking themselves the same question.

"At this point, you just want to believe," an Administration source said, "because, frankly, what else can you do? What a shame it would be if he was remembered for having sex with some kid from Beverly Hills. It just makes me sad. All that opportunity lost. And I blame him. Who else is there to blame? The fact that this woman was wired is outrageous. Ken Starr's investigations are also outrageous. What have they yielded? Jim Guy Tucker going down and Webb Hubbell on unrelated embezzlement charges? Susan McDougal in jail? Big deal. But who do I blame? I blame him." ♦

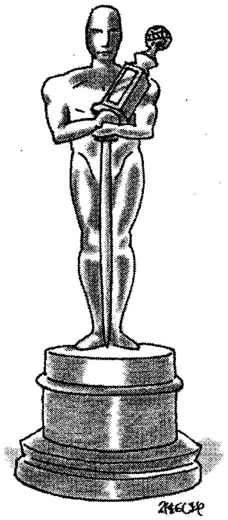
THE CULTURE INDUSTRY

GOLDEN GLOBALIZATION

The once cheesy awards show goes legit, sort of.

BY KURT ANDERSEN

A VERY few years ago, the Golden Globes were a B-list joke, annual movie and TV trophies handed out by a corruptible and inconsequential group called the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, or H.F.P.A., which consisted of a few dozen geezery, mostly third-rate show-business reporters. For four decades, the New York *Times* ignored the event. Pia Zadora's New Star of the Year award, in 1982, won after her husband flew the members of the H.F.P.A. to Las Vegas for a party, was paradigmatic. The Golden Globes in the seventies and eighties were the institutional equivalent of Sonny Bono, a tacky but harmless show-business goof.



JACK ZIEGLER; © AMPAS®

Now, of course, it's all different. Just as Sonny Bono was suddenly transformed into a respected Republican leader, the Golden Globes are now taken seriously by the studios, by networks, by the most important filmmakers, by the biggest stars, by the quality press. To hear this year's winners backstage on a recent Sunday night in Beverly Hills, you might have thought Nobels were being handed out. "This is the most amazing thing that's ever happened to me," said Matt Damon, the star and a co-writer of "Good Will Hunting." And Chris Carter, the creator of "The X-Files," said that his Golden Globe is "as high an honor as there is."

What de-stigmatized the awards? What changed? Nothing. The H.F.P.A. is still the same charmingly preposterous group of freeloaders and quasi-journalists. The emperor remains stark naked, but the establishment has chosen to stop noticing.

Over the last decade or two, Academy Award campaigns have become, like all forms of marketing, much more rationalized. Studios started spending serious money on Oscar-driven advertising, FedExing videos of movies to Academy members, even lobbying voters by telephone. At the same time, it was noticed that the recipients of Golden Globes usually won the corresponding Oscars.

That correlation may be simply a rough form of polling data: since the eighty-two voting H.F.P.A. members tend to be demographically similar to the five thousand Academy voters—slightly upper-middlebrow Southern Californians of a certain age—it stands to reason that they like the same movies and performances. Yet, because the Golden Globes are awarded before the Academy Award nominations, which won't be announced until February 10th, causality is at least possible: if an Academy voter watches Jack Nicholson entertainingly accept a Golden Globe for "As Good As It Gets," that voter may be more inclined to vote for Nicholson for an Oscar. Such is the self-fulfilling momentum of buzz. The awards season has thus evolved in tandem with the Presidential-primary process: if the Oscars, in their effect on national moviegoing behavior, are analogous to the New Hampshire primary, then the Golden Globes are the Iowa caucuses, held a few weeks earlier—an odd, inconsequential backwater ritual that acquired importance because, several elections ago, the national media and the candidates decided to imbue it with importance.

In the last few years, as movie stars noticed that more fuss was being made over the Golden Globes, they began showing up for the ceremony. Actors, in particular, thrive on flattery, even when the flattery comes from people of no standing. As Nicholson said last week after receiving his award, "It's great when people like you." And, because there are separate awards for drama and comedy, there are twice as many chances to win. This year, Steven Spielberg, Jim Carrey, Robin Williams, and Julia Roberts were all present. No one is too A-list or too serious-minded to come. As the director Jim Sheridan ("The Boxer") walked up the red carpet, a handler pitched him to "Entertainment Tonight." "It's Jim Sheridan—*he's wearing Valentino*," the publicist whispered. "E.T." passed.

As more big stars show up, more journalists do, too, and that only serves to attract more stars. The rise of the Golden Globes has occurred, not coincidentally, in parallel with the infotainment explosion—"E.T.," *E.W.*, E!, and all the rest. For a long time, the event was broadcast only on cable, befitting its second-string status, but two years ago NBC bought the rights. Indeed, with no viewer-unfriendly technical awards, and with a higher concentration of famous people, the Globes make for better pure TV candy than the Academy Awards.

Jack Nicholson talked backstage about Ving Rhames's unscripted insistence that Jack Lemmon take his trophy, and Christine Lahti's being A.W.O.L. in the bathroom when her best-actress award was announced. "This is kinda old-fashioned—people giving their awards away, going to the can," he said fondly. "I expect drunks next, like there used to be." Indeed, a certain hep stratum of Hollywood enjoys the very retro roué looseness of the Golden Globes, including the whiff of petty corruption.

In a place that exists to celebrate the magnificently bogus—stunt-car explosions and digital pterodactyls, firm, firm breasts and stucco châteaux—the Golden Globes are a vestige of ur-Hollywood. In the old days, the Oscars themselves were subject to capricious string-pulling, and were handed out at a boozy private hotel banquet for a few hundred insiders; then the Awards cleaned themselves up, and soon people were able to talk about "the Academy" with a straight face. The Golden Globes seem to be on the same evolutionary arc. Recently, in the Washington *Post's* second annual exposé, the H.F.P.A. president promised institutional reform. And the passing of another era is already being mourned. "It was better when it was cheesier," John Burnham, the co-head of the William Morris Agency's movie department, told me at a Golden Globe party. "Now that it's a part of the marketing process it's not as fun." ♦

REFLECTIONS

THE WHISTLE OF MONEY

Watching the era of excess pass you by.

BY JAMES ATLAS

IT'S a holiday weekend, and the whole family is subdued as we turn in at two stone pillars and head up the driveway in our rented Corsica, tires crunching on white gravel. We have come to view The House. One of my oldest friends in the literary world has recently hit it big. How big? This is the question that hangs in the air, palpable but unspoken, whenever we're together. A million? Two million? As I gaze through the windshield at the imposing white clapboard edifice before me, I have to wonder. The house must have cost a fortune.

Our friends and their children spill out to greet us. We hug and kiss, as we have at our frequent meetings for twenty-five years, but I suddenly feel shy. The four of us started out with nothing—two couples staying in cheap hotels on the Left Bank and renting a summer apartment in the Hamptons above a garage. We brought each other homemade house gifts—pies, cookies, jam. This year, my friend presented me with a bottle of The Macallan twelve-year-old single malt at Christmas—forty dollars at my neighborhood liquor store. Will things be different now that they have money?

We go on a tour of the house. Our friends had impeccable taste even when they had little else. (When we were young, my friend used to contemplate our half-empty living rooms and speak longingly of "the inalienable right of the middle class to own furniture.") They wouldn't dream of showing off, but they're proud of what they've accomplished. And why not? The dining room's chocolate-brown walls are lovely in the late-afternoon light, and its windows look out on a generous sweep of well-tended lawn. The custom-made dining-room table—long and narrow—has been thoughtfully designed to accommodate large gatherings and intimate conversation. The parlor—there's no other word for it—looks as if it hadn't been changed for a hundred years. In the kitchen, a nickel-plated stove gleams beneath a forest of copper pans on hooks.

This story has a happy ending: we had a good time. Our friends are of sturdy character, and have weathered their windfall with good grace. But the fact remains: through no fault of their own, their sudden wealth has inevitably cast a harsh light on my own lack of it.

At literary cocktail parties, there's more talk about Michael Eisner's stock options than there is about the new Don DeLillo.

LAWRENCE MYNOTT

Oh, I have plenty, I remind myself that night on the drive back to our summer home, a little red farmhouse in Vermont. And I do: more than I could ever have imagined possible. A house in the country that I love, even if it still looks, from certain unforgiving angles, like one of those sharecroppers' shacks that Walker Evans photographed for "Let Us Now Praise Famous Men." A nice New York apartment, even if one of our children has to sleep in the maid's room. We go on vacation twice a year, even if I have to write a piece for *Travel & Leisure* to pay for it. And if we happen to be the only family at my son's school that doesn't own a car (or, rather, a sports-utility vehicle), why, I can walk up to the counter of the Avis on West Seventy-sixth Street any day of the week, recite my Wizard number, and drive off in a "full size" rental. But do I have enough?

"You never have enough," a successful writer said to me at a party. "That's the thing about money. I've had people with ten million dollars tell me they feel poor." Ten million? In New York today—at least, in the 10021 Zip Code—they *are* poor. The city is awash in cash, and people with ten million dollars are known in certain circles as "the little rich." A friend who made a fortune on Wall Street recently informed me over lunch that he lives on two million a month: he buys contemporary art; he has several houses, each with a staff; he has a share in a private jet. It's baffling; two million dollars would have lasted my father a lifetime.

What's more, this friend's pecuniary needs don't seem to be entirely out of scale. I open the *Post* and find a feature about million-dollar bonuses on Wall Street. I pick up the *Times* and learn that people are paying in "the teen millions" for apartments on Fifth and on Park, and are *renting* for five figures a month. And—come on, admit it—how many of you read that recent article in *Vanity Fair* about money-flush Manhattan, the one that described bankers wearing twenty-five-thousand-dollar

Patek Philippes and brokers ordering five-thousand-dollar bottles of Château Pétrus at Patroon? "I read every word of it," a writer—an intellectual writer, at that—confesses over the phone. So did I. I stare out the window of my office at the ceaseless stream of Lincoln Town Cars and limousines coursing by on Park Avenue and think, Who's in those cars? Down on the street, I try to peer through the windows, but they all have tinted glass.

I also happen to know people who don't have money, and don't care about it—like my daughter's cello teacher, Mr. Benetello, a saintly man who reminds me of Alyosha in "The Brothers Karamazov." Every Friday, he arrives on his bicycle, breathless from his frantic schedule (he not only gives lessons but fills in at the New York City Opera and "The Nutcracker"), and sits cross-legged on the floor of her room, crying "Wahnderful! Wahnderful!" as he guides her little hand over the strings and imagines that she is the one producing these sublime sounds. At the end of the hour, he forgets to ask for his fee, doesn't even know how much it is. When she breaks a string while practicing, he runs over and supplies a new one free of charge. Weeks later, I learn that a cello string costs twenty-eight dollars. The musician's efficient wife calls up eventually to sort out the accounts.

But Mr. Benetello is not of this world. The rest of us are like Mrs. Kish in Delmore Schwartz's story "The World Is a Wedding." When her son Edmund is visited at home by a friend renowned for his erudition, Edmund says to his mother, "You have just seen a genius," to which Mrs. Kish replies, "How much money does he make?" Mrs. Kish, your question is the one on everybody's lips—the question we all want to ask, but don't. A literary journalist invites me to lunch at that old Wasp fortress the Racquet & Tennis Club, on Park Avenue. The place is like a Peter Arno cartoon: pale, ancient waiters shuffle among linen-covered tables beneath sparkling chandeliers. My host informs me, awkwardly, that he has "independent means." That's an interesting phrase. What does it mean? Does he have four million dollars? Twenty million dollars? A hundred million dollars? I haven't a clue, but he also lets slip that he's renovating a house in Southampton.

All the same, information leaks out. You can't avoid the byline of Graef Crystal, the "compensation" expert who writes about corporate salaries. I hear more talk at literary cocktail parties about Michael Eisner's stock options than about the new Don DeLillo. When *Forbes* publishes its annual list of the four hundred wealthiest people in America, the issue practically flies off the newsstands. And it's not just the seven-, eight-, and nine-figure guys whose bank accounts are public knowledge. Even in our little media world, people seem to know to the nickel what everyone else's book advance is, or salary, or "package." Word gets around. "He's gotta be pulling down a quarter of a million," a colleague announces with complete self-assurance when someone in his office gets a promotion. Sometimes the figures are reported in gossip columns or in *Publishers Weekly*. I don't know how many times I've read that a *GQ* writer was lured away by *Esquire* for what was reported to be three hundred thousand dollars. (Is that *with* benefits?) Sometimes you can deduce the presence of newly acquired money from the visible changes in a person's life. When a writer I know made a bundle on a screenplay sale, there were rumors to the effect that he was "buying stuff"—a Lexus, a trip to Caneel Bay, a house with antebellum pillars on a hill. A friend who made the leap from magazine journalism to writing for television suddenly had a new sartorial look: bench-made Lobb shoes, bespoke suits, and own-make shirts from Ascot Chang. Whenever I see him now, a line from Roethke pops into my head: "I run, I run to the whistle of money."

Every successive generation of immigrants has been caught up in the myth of self-betterment. But this legacy of expectation has another aspect, which has been less noticed, and that is the tradition, especially in my trade, of *not* getting ahead. From the medieval monks hunched over their illuminated manuscripts to the *poètes maudits* of nineteenth-century Paris, the arts-and-letters life has entailed a virtual vow of poverty. In contemporary Manhattan, this tradition remains alive: the computer and modem can't conceal the fact that we are living out a historical role—reading, writing, debating "the canon" at Starbucks counters all over the Upper West Side with the same scholarly fervor that

Our most romantic Valentine's gift shipped free.

Order an elegant, all-wool cape before 4 p.m., February 10, and we'll also include a fresh rose and a Victorian Valentine for your love. *To order or request free fabric swatches in six Jewel Colors, call toll free 1-888-222-9665.*

Casco Bay Fine Woolens
34 Danforth St. Box 25-NY
Portland, ME 04101
www.cascobaywoolworks.com

Only in San Antonio
O'Keeffe and Texas
January 27 – April 5, 1998
See O'Keeffe at her most daring in this exhibition of 50 key works drawn from museums and private collections throughout North America.
For tickets, call Ticketmaster: 210-224-9600
TheMcNay
THE MARION KOOGLER MCNAY ART MUSEUM
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS / www.mcnayart.org

BrightenUP
Free boutique catalog of Mica, Mission, Prairie and Tiffany style lamps and fixtures for your home and office. Prices and service that will brighten your smile.
(Lamp shown: Beaupot by Mica Lamp Co.)
The Bright Spot, Inc.
Phone 800-736-0126 • Fax 800-736-1329
e-mail: service@thebrightspot.com

PROVENCE • BASQUES • TUSCANY • SICILY • AMALFI
Small group journeys!
Easy-going walking, cultural and natural history tours:
• expert local guides • 4 to 14 guests
• historic and charming inns
For a free color catalog call:
Classic Journeys
1-800-200-3887
GREECE • TURKEY
THAILAND • PORTUGAL
COSTA RICA • ITALIAN LAKES • ALPS • BOHEMIA • IRELAND

THE POKE BOAT®
IT'S EVERYTHING A CANOE ISN'T.
It weighs only **22 pounds**. You can buy more than a canoe.
606-986-2336

my ancestors brought to their study of the Talmud.

And yet how very hard it is for us to maintain this identity in the face of such vast wealth as now surrounds us. It is a relatively simple matter not to hunger for possessions if you're living in a suburb where everyone has more or less the same things you have, or, at least, appears to—the dog, the lawn, the 1.7 children—or in one of those shabby-genteel academic communities where everyone has an old Volvo in the garage. But New York, for all its rigorous social stratification, is about mobility. You're less sequestered from other classes and social groups, both high and low: we're all jammed in together. This can be fun and not so fun. Members of the artist class are made to feel welcome at the palaces that their financial-wizard counterparts have erected across the Park—monuments to the sustained bull market of the eighties. At a dinner party on Fifth Avenue, I look out over the glittering towers of Manhattan while a squadron of waiters in black tie deploys itself in our service. A dish arrives that I initially mistake for cornflakes on a bed of risotto—but no, those beige curlicues are truffles.

There was a time, maybe forty years ago, when money didn't matter so much to writers and artists. The paint-spattered lives of de Kooning and Jackson Pollock were notable for the depth of their devotion to their art; even when rich collectors began buying their works, they maintained their boho style. They were sustained by culture, not by cash. It's instructive to read Florence Rubenfeld's new biography of Clement Greenberg, the kingpin critic of the postwar era in New York. Besides writing his powerfully divisive essays, Greenberg exerted considerable force as a dealer in art. Rubenfeld quotes Leo Castelli as saying that Greenberg "could have made a lot" from his traffic in Pollock, David Smith, and others whose work he championed. But, while it's true that he had expensive taste in restaurants, dining often at La Côte Basque, he was largely indifferent to money. "At the time of his death," Rubenfeld writes, "he had accumulated paintings but little else in the way of worldly goods. He lived comfortably but modestly. He did not own houses, cars, yachts, or even expensive clothes." He was greedy for power but not for money power. It was the currency of influence that Greenberg yearned to acquire. Nowadays, it's the currency of currency that counts. One of the most profound—and unpleasant—consequences of the Reagan revolution was the creation of a plutocracy of unimaginable wealth which split off from the middle class and left it high and dry. "You feel foolish if you're poor," a famous New York intellectual confesses. I know a literary editor who has on his desk a leather Asprey plaque on which is inscribed in gold leaf the message "Show me the money."

Now I get that old Jewish joke: What's the difference between a garment worker and a poet? A generation. Maybe that joke should be retooled for our entrepreneurial age: What's the difference between a poet and a venture capitalist?

THE novelist James Buchan, in his fascinating new book, "Frozen Desire: The Meaning of Money," gives an account of the rise and fall (and rise and fall) of his family's fortunes over several generations, from its banking origins, in the mid-nineteenth century, to its artistic efflorescence in the twentieth. His purpose, he writes, is "to find again the thread, frayed to a single twist, that connects me not only to my grandfather but to his father, the priest, and his father, the banker, and so on and on and back and back into the muddle of time." That thread, he discovers, is money, which connects all families, happy and unhappy alike.

In my family, it was Grandpa Sam who made it. He came over on the boat from Russia and started out selling postcards—"pos'l cards," he called them—from a battered suitcase. Sam had an entrepreneurial gift, and he prospered in the wool business; I have a photograph on my wall of him sitting at the wheel of a convertible Duesenberg roadster, looking very pleased with himself. When he died, in 1956, he left my family what at the time was a substantial sum of money.

My father, a bookish physician, has always been indifferent to money: he prefers browsing through "A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake" and playing chamber music to playing the stock market. "While everyone else was getting rich, I was in the laundry room making oboe reeds out of bamboo and fish skin," he told me ruefully one day a few years ago when we were going through our ritual lament about our lost inheritance—as elusive as the Treasure of the Sierra Madre. Grandpa Sam was no fool. Aware that my parents were improvident, he tied up their legacy in a trust administered by a big Chicago bank. As its value plummeted, my father made feeble attempts to wrest Grandpa's dwindling portfolio away from the bank—to no avail. That money was locked up, doomed to return a paltry per cent or two a year.

My father pretended to be serene about this loss. "So long as you have your health," he would say. The trouble is, money these days seems less like a luxury and more like a necessity. It used to be that the middle class could take for granted certain basic things in this life: light, space, quiet. Now those things are considered perks. And, while privacy is becoming unaffordable, private enclaves are springing up everywhere in public spaces. There's the Patrons Lounge at the Metropolitan Museum, the private dinners for "generous givers" at the private schools, not to speak of all the other privatizing that goes on: the first-class lounges at airports; the transportation hierarchy of limos and car services and taxis; the vacation adventures and hideaway resorts for the superaffluent. "Port Yacht Charters," an advertisement in this magazine reads: "Discover the world of private luxury yachts with crew." You're either on the yacht or off the yacht.

And, as for the line "So long as you have your health," actually, money buys health: that's why those who have it live longer than other people. A wealthy friend of mine who once lived the moneyed life but decided to become a therapist and move to the West Side told me about going to a party on Park Avenue with her old crowd: "They looked incredible. Their cheeks were like pink baby bottoms. They were all talking about their skin peels." The very rich are different from you and me. They have better skin tone.

SAY that I did, by accident, write a bestseller, or somehow came into what a friend of my dad's used to call "the big money"? What would I do with it? One night, my wife, Anna, and the kids and I were sitting around the dinner table spinning out strike-it-rich scenarios. If you could buy anything, what would you buy? Our son had his eye on a giant dog from F.A.O. Schwarz. Price: two hundred and ninety-five dollars. Our daughter couldn't think of anything she wanted. Anna wanted not to have to worry about money anymore. I wanted—I know this is nauseating—a Range Rover. ("Please don't," my brother said curtly when I unwisely shared this fantasy with him.) Or we could move to the other side of our building, which has seven-room apartments, but even thinking about that prospect wearied us: there would be the endless meetings with lawyers and bankers; the real-estate agents calling at all hours of the day and night; the closing; the decorating; the schlepping of belongings through the lobby. Who needs it? I have great admiration for a friend of mine in the Midwest: a hugely successful novelist, he lives in a modest house in a modest neighborhood, and refuses to move. He just keeps adding rooms and wings to it until now there's hardly any lawn left. "I'm happy where I am," he says.

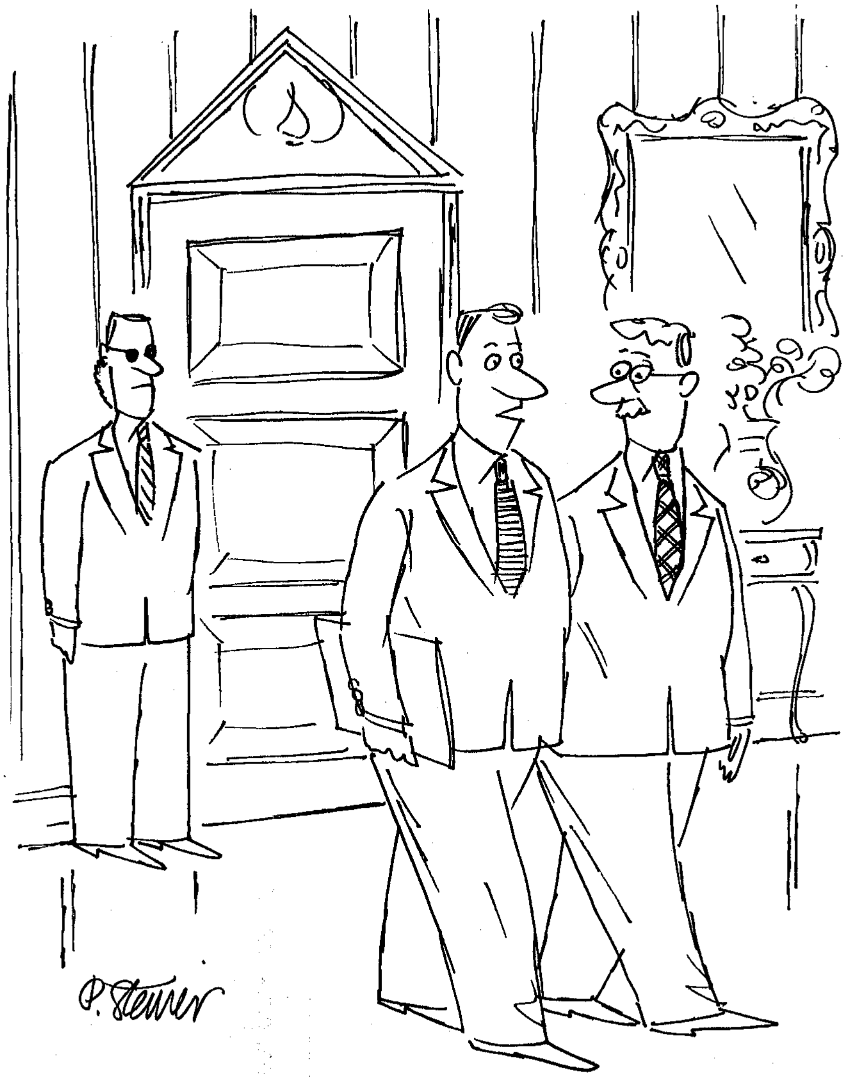
So I'm trying to be happy where I am. Being rich, I tell myself, would be like having another full-time job. If you're rich, you have to attend benefits, collect art, serve on boards, maintain servants, and tend to your investments. And you have to figure out how to give your money away, which can be as strenuous as earning it in the first place. "The advice I offer is to think about it the way you would think about an investment portfolio," Hildy Simmons, who manages charitable giving for J. P. Morgan, told me. "You expect some kind of return. Maybe you want to find some blue chips—the Metropolitan Museum, Harvard, the New York Public Library—then some things where you won't see a payoff right away, like the Women's Housing and Economic Development Corporation. Creative giving is like venture capital—it's high risk."

I console myself with tales of colossal dysfunction among the rich—families divided over money, afflicted with drinking problems and drug abuse, and caught up in property feuds and bitter disinheritance scenarios. And when I read the class notes in the *Putney Post*—Anna is an alum, and gets it in the mail—I consider myself lucky. These people are bound and gagged by money. Children of wealth, they appear to have *drifted* into the arts: "Am painting fulltime"; "I'm doing sculpture"; "This summer I plan to finish my first novel." The place turns out more sheep farmers than all of Scotland, more poets than the Iowa Writers' Workshop. "Finally, in my 50th year, I am supporting myself (sort of) with my writing," a member of the class of '64 reports. Sort of?

I probably shouldn't make fun of this privileged constituency; it's not easy to make a living in the arts, and it never has been. Sitting in the reading room of the New York Society Library one afternoon, I come upon a passage in Balzac's "Lost Illusions": "Like most journalists, Lucien lived from hand to mouth, spending his money as fast as he earned it, giving no thought to the periodic expenses of Paris life which all bohemians find so crushing." My heart quickens with the pleasure of recognition.

Still, I sometimes think how nice it would be to march into Barneys and grab one of those fifteen-hundred-dollar blazers off the rack, or put in a new kitchen. "I never did anything to make money," my friend with the big house said to me over lunch one day not long after he joined the ranks of the rich. "I've always done what I wanted to do, and it just happened."

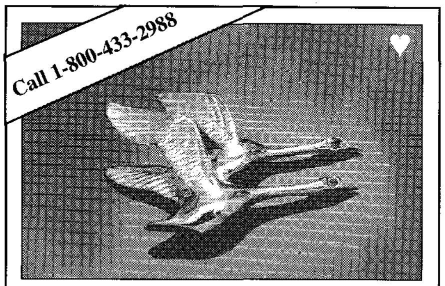
So have I. Now show me the money. ♦



"How long has the Oval Office had a mirror on the ceiling?"

• •

Call 1-800-433-2988



Geese Mate For Life
Symbol of Eternal Love

Eternal love is beautifully symbolized in our Geese Mate for Life pin. Finely crafted in 14K yellow gold, two geese are majestically depicted together in flight. As a gesture of your love, or the special bond between two people, it makes the perfect gift. Comes beautifully gift wrapped with the sentiments expressed by this piece on a small card tucked inside the box. Shown actual size.

Pin with ruby eyes	**$345.00**
Pendant w/ruby eyes, 18" chain	**$445.00**
with diamonds eyes	add $100.00

Absolute Satisfaction Guaranteed

Mail or phone orders M-F 9am - 5pm
Free Second Day Air Shipping
1-800-433-2988

Cross Jewelers
Manufacturing Jewelers Since 1908
570 N Congress St., Portland, ME 04101 © 92

Charleston's Beach Resorts

Kiawah
Seabrook & Wild Dunes
28-Page Resort Guide includes nautical chart, maps, golf packages, bike trails, fishing, boating, tours of historic Charleston and more!

Free 28-Page Resort Guides
Kiawah Island 1-800-845-3911
Wild Dunes 1-800-346-0606
Seabrook 1-800-845-2233
great beach vacations

The New Ravenel Associates, Kiawah Island, SC 29455 • Ad #179

TURKEY

Discover the best—in style. Hike to remote ruins, balloon over Cappadocia, sail the Turquoise Coast. Luxuriate at Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul.

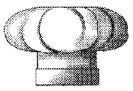
SMALL GROUPS. FREE VIDEO AND BROCHURE.

INCA *(Inca Floats, Inc.)*
1311-YT 63rd Street, Emeryville, CA 94608
510-420-1550 incafloats@aol.com

La Scuola del Pettirosso

Master Italian cookery in 6-days in Italy while enjoying gourmet meals, wines, & fascinating day trips in comfort & luxury. Novices & chefs alike will bloom at Chef Chiavaroli's side.

800 280 2811



THE PARKER COMPANY
Italian Villas & Tours

CHAPEL HILL, NORTH CAROLINA

Retire to Fearrington, a Country Village full of bluebirds, hollyhocks, and fascinating people of all ages. Please write, call or come and see us.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE: http://www.fearrington.com
2000N Fearrington Post, Pittsboro, NC 27312. 800-277-0130

OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

NEW ORLEANS UNMASKED

Mardi Gras used to be about aristocracy. Now it's about equality. Has any other celebration chronicled the progress of a city so well?

BY CALVIN TRILLIN

I ONCE knew a pediatrician who used to say that coaxing information out of a shy toddler was sometimes simply a matter of handing her a Raggedy Ann and asking, "How's the dolly feeling?" When it comes to New Orleans, some of us have always thought of Mardi Gras as the dolly. In 1956, Munro S. Edmonson, an anthropologist at Tulane, wrote that Mardi Gras—or Carnival, as people in New Orleans often refer to it —"expresses the society of New Orleans." When I asked him about the subject forty years later, he had not changed his mind. "Mardi Gras and New Orleans are virtually congruent," he said. There aren't many American festivals that could be described as congruent with the city they take place in. By analyzing the volunteer network that runs the Tournament of Roses, for instance, a social scientist might learn a bit about the pecking order of the more prosperous residents of Pasadena, but the participants in the central event—like the participants in the central event of the Indianapolis 500 or the Kentucky Derby—come from out of town.

For those of us given to drawing inferences from Mardi Gras the way Kremlinologists used to draw inferences from the lineup on the May Day reviewing stand, the one element of Carnival which has long seemed to be dominated by out-of-towners—the general celebration by crowds spilling out of the French Quarter on Shrove Tuesday itself—has always been of little interest. The Carnival events that command our attention consist of locals celebrating while other people look on. From my first Mardi Gras, in 1961, I was struck by how little some of those events resembled what might be seen in other American cities. There were elaborately costumed black men roaming the streets as Indian tribes. There were marching societies made up of white stevedores—among the working-class people known in New Orleans as "yats," for their greeting "Where y'at?"—stumbling through the Irish Channel in high heels and dresses behind a black jazz band. On elaborately decorated floats, Carnival krewe members, wearing blank-face masks, tossed out strings of beads to onlookers who were shouting "Throw me something, Mister!"—or, in Edmonson's interpretation, aristocrats dispensed largesse to the *profanum vulgus*. Watching the Mardi Gras parades staged by the krewes whose members were thought of as aristocrats in New Orleans even during the rest of the year, the exclusive and secretive krewes of Comus and Momus and Proteus, I used to try to imagine the residents of New York turning out to observe members of the Union League Club, masked and costumed as if they'd wandered off the set of "Les Liaisons Dangereuses," pass by on papier-mâché floats, tossing cheap souvenir necklaces to the crowd.

On the morning of Shrove Tuesday, families lined up on St. Charles Avenue to watch the main event of Carnival—the parade of Rex, the second-oldest parading krewe, whose tradition of civic obligation had led it to take in an outer circle of some men known for their accomplishments or their net worth rather than their bloodlines. On one of the first floats was a prominent businessman who reigned as Rex and therefore King of Carnival. He would stop at a stand in front of Gallier Hall, the graceful old building that had once been City Hall, to be toasted by the Mayor, and then stop for another toast at the Boston Club—where he was already familiar, since Rex was traditionally chosen from among the Boston Club's membership. That night, Rex presided over one of two fancy balls held simultaneously at the Municipal Auditorium. The other ball was held by the krewe of Comus, the oldest and most exclusive Carnival krewe, whose parade to the auditorium that evening had brought the Mardi Gras season to an end. Sometime before midnight, Rex and his court would leave their own festivities so that Rex could pay his respects to that year's Comus. If you missed the symbolism, you could get it from the next day's paper: although Rex was King of Carnival, the fact that he travelled to Comus indicated the primacy of the social over the civic.

In New Orleans, it had always been assumed that people would celebrate Carnival in their own way. Photograph by Jeff Day.

IN the early sixties, that was probably still a fair description of New Orleans. Long after old money had faded as a powerful civic and commercial force in most American cities, New Orleans had the reputation of being a place where the most influential businessmen were people whose credentials might include, say, membership in the Louisiana Club and a sister who was Queen of Momus in her débutante season and an uncle who had run the krewe of Proteus as its captain for many years. The clubmen—not their wives—planned the Carnival celebration. On one trip to New Orleans in those years, I asked a local lawyer how the most prominent businessmen in town could spend so much of their time planning the theme of the Comus parade or negotiating with their peers over whose daughter was going to be Queen of Proteus and whose daughters would have to make do with positions in the court. He said that the most important thing to know about the most prominent businessmen in New Orleans was that they tended to be in the sorts of business that could be handled just as easily by their secretaries if they didn't make it back to the office after lunch.

Even in that era, there was scattered grumbling about Carnival. Some people said it was divisive. In the thirties, when Mardi Gras seemed to be threatened with extinction through lack of funds, Rex had taken in some Jewish members—it assigned them all to the same float—but the old-line krewes of Comus and Momus and Proteus, like the men's luncheon clubs that many of their members belonged to, did not allow Jews or Italians or, it goes without saying, blacks. It wasn't simply that a Jew was not allowed to be a member of the krewe; he was not allowed at its Carnival ball as one of the guests who, dressed in white tie and tails, sat in the stands at the Municipal Auditorium and watched masked krewe members dancing with guests from the "call-out" section. The exclusion was openly acknowledged. People at the top of New Orleans society always seemed to take particular pride in maintaining their own criteria for admission, even those criteria that might strike some people as bigoted. To this day, the Mardi Gras stories told by wellborn New Orleanians tend to include at least one about some big shot from another city who came to Carnival under the assumption of being able to command an invitation to the Comus ball and got his comeuppance.

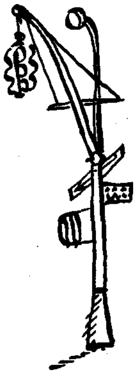
As it happened, the Jewish community of New Orleans, mostly German-Jewish and long established in the region, included a number of men who attended school and went duck-hunting and maybe even practiced law with the sort of men who might belong to the Pickwick Club and ride in both the Comus and the Rex parades. Whatever resentment they felt, though, they were hardly the type of people who might demonstrate outside the Momus ball. In the late sixties, I began some observations on Carnival by saying that one of the old Mardi Gras customs still observed by a few of the most prominent Jewish families in New Orleans was to leave town.

Joseph Bernstein, a local lawyer who over the years tried to raise the issue of the Carnival krewes' exclusion of Jews, has said that he never found the New

Orleans Jewish community a great source of support. He did, however, find some allies among people who had a sort of overlapping criticism of Mardi Gras—that it drained away a lot of money and energy that would have been better used elsewhere. In modern times, New Orleans has been among the poorest American cities. When I began my Mardi Gras visits, it was poking along on its natural endowments—its port, the state oil royalties that removed irritations such as property taxes, and a moderate but steady supply of tourists, mainly people from Mississippi and Texas and northern Louisiana who felt the need to confirm with their own eyes the sort of debauchery that Popishness and loose liquor laws could produce. The clubmen of New Orleans had a reputation for cutting down anyone who wandered into town displaying an unseemly amount of entrepreneurial energy.

The critics asked how new industry could be attracted to New Orleans if its executives were automatically shut out of the city's most famous attraction. Could cultural institutions survive forever when the people who would ordinarily be expected to support them poured money into tableau regalia and Carnival beads instead? In 1972, a councilman—a Jewish councilman, as it happened—got nowhere with a proposal that Carnival krewes, which had always claimed that their parades were private events with no connection to tourism, pick up a share of policing and cleanup costs. Moon Landrieu, who had been elected mayor a year or so earlier with strong black support, had better luck in making an adjustment to Carnival which brought it slightly more in line with the realities of the city. When the krewe of Rex resisted Landrieu's suggestion that it invite four or five prominent black citizens to its ball, the Mayor informed the captain of Rex that if the invitations were not issued His Majesty would find the stands in front of Gallier Hall empty when he stopped for the traditional toast. On the day after Mardi Gras that year, a picture of a black couple in formal dress at the Rex ball appeared on the front page of the *Times-Picayune*. We analysts should have seen that as a harbinger of how city government's view of Carnival aristocracy was bound to change as the voter-registration figures changed. As it turned out, Moon Landrieu was the last white mayor of New Orleans.

By that time—the early seventies—I suppose we should also have been able to predict a major shift in the city by the growing popularity of the parade staged by a new krewe called Bacchus. The shift was caused mainly by an oil boom, which began in earnest in 1973. Poydras Street, on the edge of a central business district that had always been known for office buildings of modest height, sprouted a line of high-rises with names like One Shell Square, and the oil buildings were followed in the next dozen years by the Superdome and some hotels of a size that New Orleans had never before seen and a large convention center. As out-of-state white-collar workers moved in to staff the oil company's offices, there was a lot of talk about the possibility of "Houstonization." My own view was that New Orleans was becoming not more like Houston but more like Houston's vision of what New Orleans ought to be—a more conveniently packaged mockup of itself, cleansed of funk and unpredictability.



In the view of Henri Schindler, a float designer and connoisseur of traditional Mardi Gras, Bacchus was to the old-line parades as One Shell Square was to Gallier Hall. Far from insisting that its parade had nothing to do with tourism, Bacchus, which had among its founders prominent hotel and restaurant people, was frank about wanting to provide something for visitors on what had always been a dead night in the Carnival season. Each Bacchus float was large enough to hold as many people as rode on a dozen Comus floats, and the supply of beads and plastic cups and souvenir doubloons—what New Orleans people refer to generically as "throws"—flew out from the float in a thick spray. Although Bacchus was all white for its first few years, it was otherwise uninterested in lineage. The king was not some wellborn New Orleans clubman hidden behind a mask. The first King of Bacchus was Danny Kaye. Eventually, another completely nonexclusive krewe, called Endymion, began putting on parades that, as they say in New Orleans, "out-Bacchused Bacchus."

Bacchus and Endymion were viewed with great disdain by members of the old-line krewes and by devotees of what is sometimes called "classic Carnival." The public, though, found the parades of what became known as the superkrewes enormously exciting. The old-line krewes seemed insubstantial by comparison. Compared with the new economic powers in New Orleans, the clubmen were, in fact, insubstantial by then. According to Tim Ryan, the dean of the business school at the University of New Orleans, the oil boom was "the nail in the coffin" of the power exercised by the clubmen in their cozy little economic backwater; there was nothing cozy about dealing with Mobil or Texaco. It became obvious even to someone who hardly left the confines of the Boston Club that the leading businessmen in New Orleans were from Texas and lunched elsewhere. New Orleans was becoming slicker and more middle-class and more overtly commercial—more like the rest of America, some people said.

In the middle eighties, as the oil boom receded, it became apparent that the port of New Orleans had shrunk drastically. A lot of the yats had gone, replaced by nonworking poor. Much of the state oil subsidy was also gone. The departure of people from the Poydras Street oil offices segued into a general white flight, fuelled partly by a fearsome increase in crime and a near-disintegration of the police department. Given the dire economic circumstances, voices that had warned of the perils of unchecked tourism were stilled. The strip along the river, which had been working docks, became first a World's Fair and then a river walk of shopping that connected to another river walk of shopping. An aquarium was built, and a casino was planned. New Orleans, finding itself with eleven thousand fewer stevedores and twenty thousand more hotel rooms than it had in the sixties, seemed resigned to being a national-convention town and a party town—a place where Bourbon Street, instead of being closed to cars on four or five big weekends of the year, was closed every night. New Orleans had become a Bacchus sort of place. Yet the old-line krewes were still at the center of Carnival. Television still carried the meeting of Rex and Comus at a ball from which at least two-thirds of the city's residents—blacks and Jews and Italians and Hispanics and a variety of new immigrants—

were explicitly excluded by ethnic background. If Carnival was going to remain congruent with New Orleans, some further adjustments were in order.

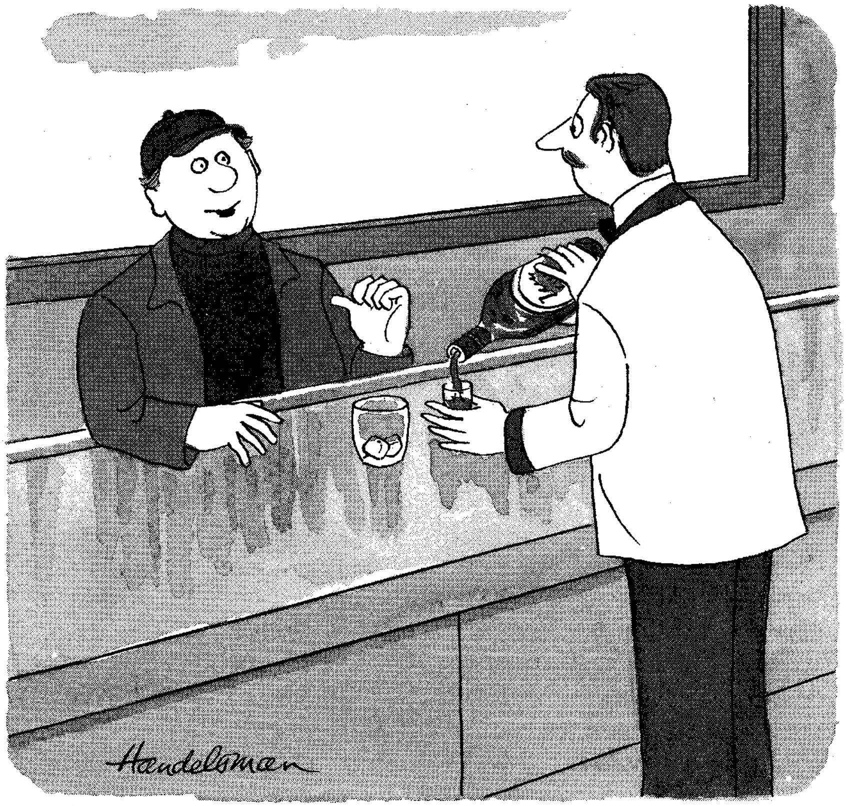
IN the years after the oil boom—the late eighties—Joe Bernstein was considering litigation. A Supreme Court ruling upholding New York City's authority to regulate private clubs in certain circumstances appeared to have increased the legal vulnerability of the krewes, which, after all, paraded through public streets with the support of city police and city sanitation workers. Litigation turned out to be unnecessary. A few months before the 1992 Carnival, a black city-council member named Dorothy Mae Taylor introduced an ordinance that would prohibit a parade permit to any group that discriminated on the basis of race or religion or gender. By then, blacks had what the Jews could never have had—a majority on the city council.

When people in New Orleans talk about how the old-line krewe captains resisted the ordinance, it sounds like the tale of a rather delicate private-school boy who, perhaps because of some disastrous financial reversal in his family, is suddenly thrown into a rough-and-ready public school in a less than refined neighborhood. In public hearings, it is said, the captains were alarmed by the insulting language and the television lights; they were, of course, accustomed to negotiating in the quiet cardrooms of clubs. As people who thought they had been doing a good deed by putting on a parade, they felt hurt at being cast as selfish, and even racist. They were forced to defend themselves with studies showing—of all things—how much tourist money their parades brought in. Not everyone was sympathetic to their plight. At the last public hearing, Joe Bernstein ran into the captain of Comus. "I gave him my dirtiest look," Bernstein recalls. "And I said, 'Your day is here.' " It was. The ordinance passed.

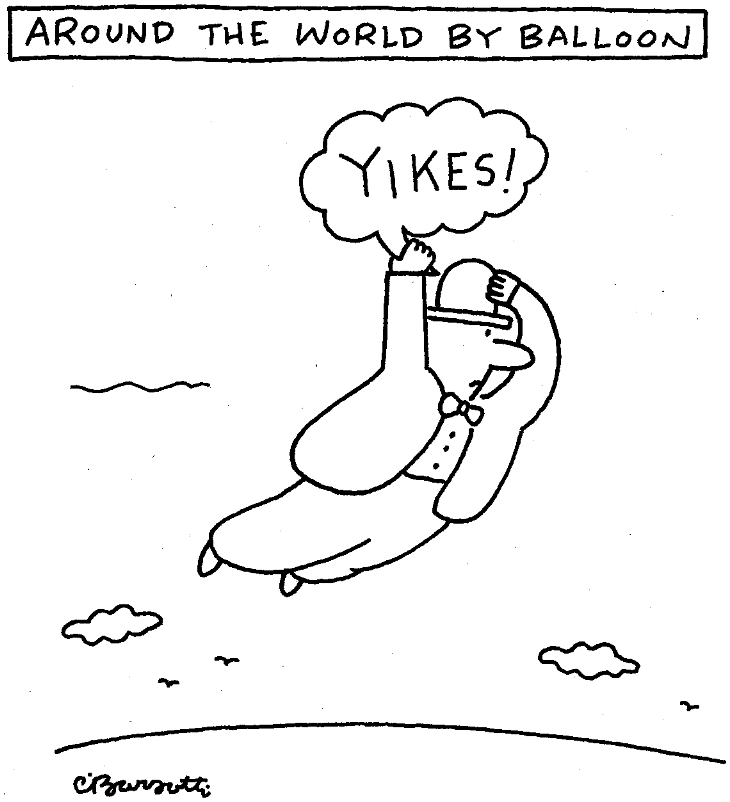
It is generally thought that Mrs. Taylor's ordinance was aimed at the men's luncheon clubs at least as much as at the Carnival krewes. There was also speculation that, in a city whose black population was approaching sixty-five per cent, she was hoping that the antidiscrimination measure might launch her in the direction of City Hall. If so, she miscalculated. An overwhelming number of white people thought that the ordinance was a bad idea, and, according to two separate surveys, so did a slim majority of black people. The hearings were emotional and at times acrimonious, but there had never been any indication that black people in New Orleans, many of whom were facing serious problems just feeding their families and keeping out of the line of fire, had considered the desegregation of old-line Carnival krewes to be high on their list of priorities.

Although it may have seemed incongruous for the black mayor of a modern American city to pay the city's ritual respects to an explicitly white king of a segregated private club, Carnival had traditionally been replete with incongruities. When I saw the Zulu Social Aid and Pleasure Club parade on Shrove Tuesday thirty-seven years ago, for instance, it was widely considered a sort of moving "Amos 'n' Andy" show that would eventually crumble under the pressure of respectable black people. But Zulus still parade in blackface and grass skirts every Shrove Tuesday; their parade has changed only in having grown more lavish and, somehow, more acceptable, with the inclusion of black professionals and politicians and a number of white people. In New Orleans, it had always been assumed that people would celebrate Carnival in their own way, whether it was by riding in the parade of an all-woman krewe or holding a ball-gown contest for men in drag. There was a widespread feeling that applying human-relations-commission rules to Carnival might not only rob it of its oldest parades but sink it altogether.

The hearings and meetings and arguments over the ordinance lasted nearly a year. Eventually, the council softened the ordinance somewhat—dropping, among other things, the prohibition against discrimination by gender—but there was a strong feeling in City Hall that New Orleans, which had become dependent on national organizations that are sensitive to the political situation in the cities they choose as convention sites, could not be in the position of rescinding a civil-rights law. A lot of people in New Orleans, including a lot of people in City Hall, were hoping that, through something like a creative stroke of semantics, Mrs. Taylor's ordinance could be made to be what one white councilman called "more of a policy statement than an implementation statement." The Mayor and the captains, with the help of a citizens' committee, tried to find some way that the krewes could be seen as complying with the ordinance without giving up their secret membership lists or, of course, their whiteness. The



"I belong to that heroic little band of unemployed on whom a healthy economy depends."


AROUND THE WORLD BY BALLOON
YIKES!
CBarsotti

negotiations were complicated by the fact that the New Orleans men's luncheon clubs became involved in litigation over their discriminatory practices, and the overtly public aspects of their Carnival connection were thought to make them more vulnerable—particularly in the case of Momus and the Louisiana Club, which have identical membership. For a moment, it seemed that there might be an agreement to allow krewes to parade if they simply affirmed that there was nothing in their bylaws that mandated discrimination, but the deal fell through. Even before the 1992 Mardi Gras, Comus and Momus had announced that they would cancel their parades.

Apparently, the krewe of Rex was strongly divided. Although most of its members presumably hated the ordinance, Rex had always felt the civic obligation reflected in its motto, "Pro Bono Publico." For a number of years, in fact, it had been considering, in its own deliberate way, the possibility of taking in blacks as members rather than simply inviting a few to the Carnival ball. There were members of Rex, some of whom were also members of Comus and Momus, who argued that Rex should stand firm with the other krewes against the ordinance, and at times that seemed to be its position. Most Mardi Gras-watchers in New Orleans, though, think that there was never really any doubt that in the end Rex would continue to parade. Eventually, Rex announced that it would comply with the ordinance. It invited some black men to become members.

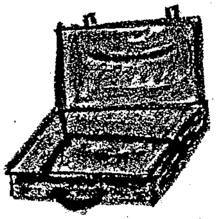
By the 1993 Mardi Gras, Proteus had also pulled out. The Boston Club announced that it would no longer erect a stand on the public sidewalk for the traditional toast to Rex. Comus and Momus and Proteus went on with their parties and their masked Carnival balls—mostly in hotel banquet halls now, since the Municipal Auditorium had been temporarily transformed into a gambling casino. Rex continued to pay his respects at the end of the evening to Comus, although television cameras were no longer permitted at the ceremony.

Eventually, the men's luncheon clubs won a federal-court decision preventing the city from inspecting their membership lists. With that, some people in New Orleans concluded that the battle over the ordinance had ended in a sort of standoff: the clubs and the krewes had control of their membership, and the city had control of its streets. There is a widespread belief in New Orleans that many members of old-line krewes were not heartbroken at being relieved of the expense and bother of parading. A member of, say, Comus who doesn't feel that way might be a member of Rex as well, so he'd still have an opportunity to ride on high, dispensing beads to the *profanum vulgus*. Rex has the advantage of parading in the daytime. There is no question that even parade enthusiasts in the old-line krewes were growing edgy about being on the floats as the parades approached the downtown housing projects in the dark—a time when the cries for beads could begin to sound menacing and there was always the thought that what might get thrown back in return was a beer bottle or a brick.

THE departure of the old-line parades did not, of course, sink Mardi Gras. In a way, the celebration encompasses more of the city than ever: the *Times-Picayune's* Carnival supplement for the Carnival season, which culminates this year on February 24th, will list about seventy parades, a majority of them in the suburbs. Given the impact of the superkrewes, it isn't easy to find people who lament the absence of the Comus and Momus and Proteus parades. The regular onlookers have been particularly happy with the Monday-night replacement for Proteus—a consciously nonexclusive krewe called Orpheus that was founded after the ordinance controversy by the district attorney, Harry Connick, and his son, the singer Harry Connick, Jr., to celebrate New Orleans music. When I mentioned Comus and Momus and Proteus to parade-watchers at last year's Mardi Gras, the first thing many of them said was that the old-line krewes were stingy with their Carnival beads.

The absence of Comus and Momus and Proteus is certainly disappointing to a small band of people in New Orleans who saw those parades as the repository of the beauty and grace of the classic Carnival. Someone like Henri Schindler, who used to design the Comus floats according to themes taken from mythology, finds it difficult to talk about the Bacchus and Endymion parades without a shudder. When he recalls the old-line parades, he is talking about the possessions of the old-money rich—understated, authentic. Some of the wagons on which the floats were built are nineteenth-century caissons with wooden wheels—literally antiques, as opposed to the designer-showroom floats used by the superkrewes. He sees another loss. The people who used to ride in the old-line parades live in New Orleans, many of them in graceful Garden District houses that are themselves historic artifacts; the people who ride the glitzy parades, Schindler suspects, are mostly people who left for the suburbs.

If so many of the city's white people have fled to soulless suburbs, of course, it stands to reason that the dominant parades would be, in essence, suburban. In fact, if New Orleans is increasingly a place based on tourism that is connected in one way or another to business—a place whose convention center will soon be large enough to permit one convention to move in while another is still going on, thus eliminating setup and teardown lulls and creating the theoretical possibility of having a convention in town every single day of the year—it stands to reason that a number of the masked riders in Carnival parades are from Houston or Los Angeles or New York. From the beginning, roughly twenty per cent of the people riding the Orpheus parade have been from out of town—people like sales reps and their customers getting a buzz by riding through the streets of New Orleans in masks, tossing Carnival beads. Decades after the grip of the clubmen on the city's economy loosened—and decades, for that matter, after the old-line parades were what the *profanum vulgus* found most exciting about Carnival—it stands to reason that the old-money krewes would retreat to exercising their good taste among their own.



Last Mardi Gras, which marked the hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of Rex, the Rex Carnival ball was covered by the local public-television station. As the débutantes came forward, the members of their families who had been kings and dukes and pages were mentioned by the commentator. The ball seemed overwhelmingly sedate, particularly considering that it was taking place while the streets of the French Quarter were jammed with drunks—most of them begging Carnival beads from people on balconies or from one another, even though they all appeared to be wearing four or five pounds of beads already. (As the celebration in the Quarter has come more and more to resemble spring vacation in a Florida beach town that has no police force, exhibitionism has become part of the Carnival-bead transaction, and the most widely heard cry is no longer "Throw me something, Mister" but "Show us your tits.") Last year, for the first time since the controversy over the Taylor ordinance began, television cameras were also at the Comus ball when Rex and his court came to pay their respects to Comus, a portly man wearing Louis XIV clothing and a mask. The resumption of coverage was seen in New Orleans as a welcome sign of rapprochement.

This year, when Comus greets Rex it will be back at the Municipal Auditorium. But nobody sees the return of the Carnival balls to the auditorium as the first step of the revisionists' creeping back into the temple. In the context of modern Mardi Gras, the ceremony that brings together Rex and Comus seems like a quaint, almost vestigial tableau—off to the side, as it might be in a regular American city. If the public-television station wanted to film a symbolic meeting that actually represented modern Carnival, it would have to arrange for Rex and Comus to gather up their entourages and go to pay their respects to Bacchus. This summer, in fact, the out-Bacchusing of Bacchus was carried one step further. The city council awarded a parade permit for Mardi Gras night—traditionally, Comus's night—to a new krewe that intended to draw eighty per cent of its riders from out of town. Membership is the product of a simple business transaction—buying a "lavish hospitality package," offered mainly through a brochure sent to names on mailing lists. For three thousand three hundred dollars, including costume and throws, the out-of-towner can "parade on an historic route through crowds that cry out to you to throw them the traditional favors" and stay for five nights at a first-class hotel. Apparently, the marketing campaign, which was widely criticized in the city's press as a commercialization of Carnival, attracted less than half of the thousand riders originally hoped for. Still, the organizers say that the parade will definitely roll on Mardi Gras night, its floats decorated in keeping with the theme "From Sea to Shining Sea." The new krewe calls itself the Krewe of America. ♦

A Few Words About New Years Resolutions...
Text: Ship happens.
12 cards with envelopes
$18, all inclusive
Send check or money order to:
McGREET.
P.O. Box 17954
Beverly Hills, CA 90209-3954
Phone: (888) McGREET/(310) 553-7654
Fax: (310) 553-5405/email: McGreet@AOL.com
Catalog on request

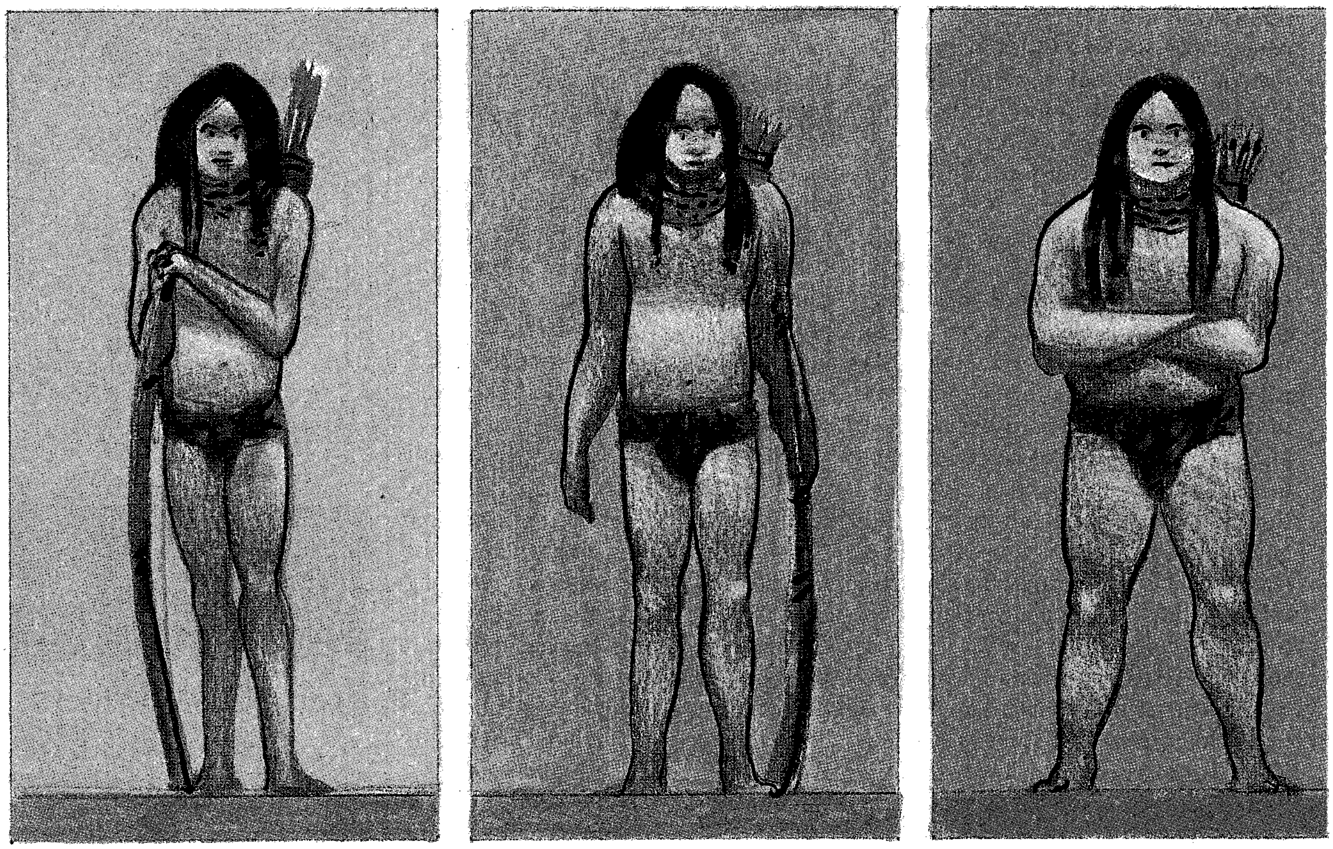
Fresh Cut Flowers.
The Flower Puzzle
• 25 Flower-Shaped Pieces
• Handcut Hardwood
• Depiction on front
• Description on back
• 18" x 20"
$59.50
VISA/MC
800-695-9913
Pieceful Solutions®
P.O. Box 2014
Southeastern, PA 19399

For the discriminating vacationer
a commitment to excellence
Kiawah Island
Rentals and Sales
Pam Harrington Exclusives
803-768-0273 1-800-845-6966

CHOICE RARE LOOSE-LEAF
TEAS
FROM ESTATES & GARDENS WORLDWIDE
TODD & HOLLAND
TEA MERCHANTS
FREE 36-PAGE CATALOG
1-800-747-8327
www.Todd-Holland.com
7577 Lake Street, River Forest, IL 60305 USA

DISCOVER THE SPLENDOR OF ITALY
Beautiful homes for rent at affordable weekly rates
in Abruzzo, Tuscany, Umbria, Lakes Como & Garda, the Italian Riviera, Rome, Amalfi, Capri, Venice, Sicily & more.
800 280 2811
THE PARKER COMPANY
ITALIAN VILLAS & TOURS

World's Largest Inventory
China, Crystal, Flatware & Collectibles
80,000 Patterns • 4 Million Pieces
Discontinued & Active • Buy & Sell
REPLACEMENTS, LTD.
1-800-REPLACE (1-800-737-5223)
PO Box 26029, Greensboro, NC 27420 • Dept. YO



ANNALS OF MEDICINE

THE PIMA PARADOX

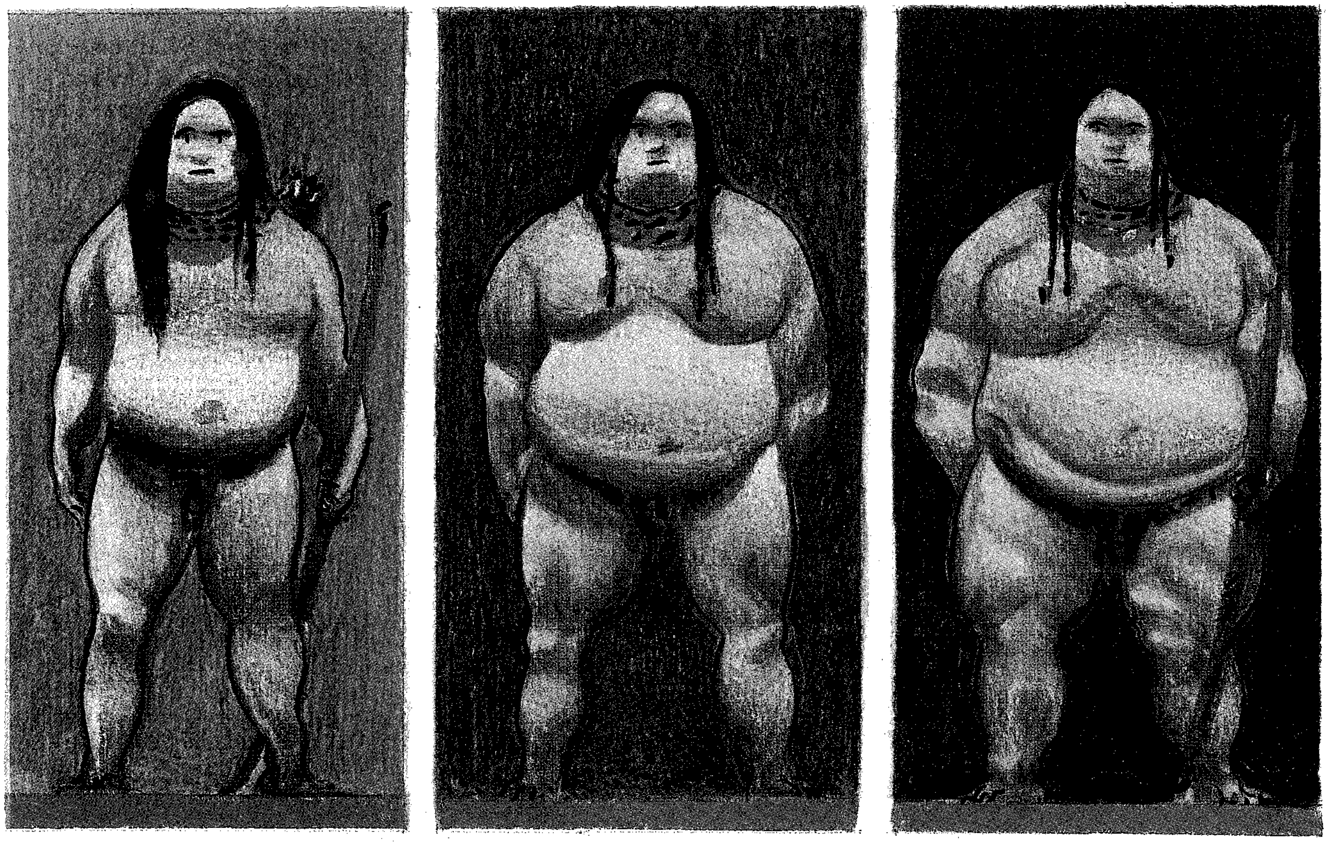
Can we learn how to lose weight from one of the most obese people in the world?

BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

SACATON lies in the center of Arizona, just off Interstate 10, on the Gila River reservation of the Pima Indian tribe. It is a small town, dusty and unremarkable, which looks as if it had been blown there by a gust of desert wind. Shacks and plywood bungalows are scattered along a dirt-and-asphalt grid. Dogs crisscross the streets. Back yards are filled with rusted trucks and junk. The desert in these parts is scruffy and barren, drained of water by the rapid growth of Phoenix, just half an hour's drive to the north. The nearby Gila River is dry, and the fields of wheat and cushaw squash and tepary beans which the Pima used to cultivate are long gone. The only prepossessing building in Sacaton is a gleaming low-slung modern structure on the outskirts of town—the Hu Hu Kam Memorial Hospital. There is nothing bigger or more impressive for miles, and that is appropriate, since medicine is what has brought Sacaton any wisp of renown it has.

Thirty-five years ago, a team of National Institutes of Health researchers arrived in Sacaton to study rheumatoid arthritis. They wanted to see whether the Pima had higher or lower rates of the disease than the Blackfoot of Montana. A third of the way through their survey, however, they realized that they had stumbled on something altogether strange—a population in the grip of a plague. Two years later, the N.I.H. returned to the Gila River Indian Reservation in force. An exhaustive epidemiological expedition was launched, in which thousands of Pima were examined every two years by government scientists, their weight and height and blood pressure checked, their blood sugar monitored, and their eyes and kidneys scrutinized. In Phoenix, a modern medical center devoted to Native Americans was built; on its top floor, the N.I.H. installed a state-of-the-art research lab, including the first metabolic chamber in North America—a sealed room in which to measure the precise energy intake and expenditure of Pima research subjects. Genetic samples were taken; family histories were mapped; patterns of illness and death were traced from relative to relative and generation to generation. Today, the original study group has grown from four thousand people to seven thousand five hundred, and so many new studies have been added to the old that the total number of research papers arising from the Gila River reservation takes up almost forty feet of shelf space in the N.I.H. library in Phoenix.

LORENZO MATTOTTI



The Pima Indians came to Arizona two thousand years ago carrying in their genes a blueprint for obesity.

The Pima are famous now—famous for being fatter than any other group in the world, with the exception only of the Nauru Islanders of the West Pacific. Among those over thirty-five on the reservation, the rate of diabetes, the disease most closely associated with obesity, is fifty per cent, eight times the national average and a figure unmatched in medical history. It is not unheard of in Sacaton for adults to weigh five hundred pounds, for teen-agers to be suffering from diabetes, or for relatively young men and women to be already disabled by the disease—to be blind, to have lost a limb, to be confined to a wheelchair, or to be dependent on kidney dialysis. When I visited the town, on a monotonously bright desert day not long ago, I watched a group of children on a playing field behind the middle school moving at what seemed to be half speed, their generous shirts and baggy jeans barely concealing their bulk. At the hospital, one of the tribe's public-health workers told me that when she began an education program on nutrition several years ago she wanted to start with second graders, to catch the children before it was too late. "We were under the delusion that kids didn't gain weight until the second grade," she said, shaking her head. "But then we realized we'd have to go younger. Those kids couldn't run around the block."

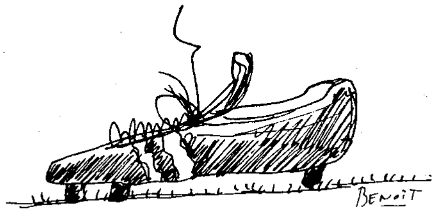
From the beginning, the N.I.H. researchers have hoped that if they can understand why the Pima are so obese they can better understand obesity in the rest of us; the assumption is that obesity in the Pima is different only in degree, not in kind. One hypothesis for the Pima's plight, favored by Eric Ravussin, of the N.I.H.'s Phoenix team, is that after generations of living in the desert the only Pima who survived famine and drought were those highly adept at storing fat in times of plenty. Under normal circumstances, this disposition was kept in check by the Pima's traditional diet: cholla-cactus buds, honey mesquite, povertyweed, and prickly pears from the desert floor; mule deer, white-winged dove, and black-tailed jackrabbit; squawfish from the Gila River; and wheat, squash, and beans grown in irrigated desert fields. By the end of the Second World War, however, the Pima had almost entirely left the land, and they began to eat like other Americans. Their traditional diet had been fifteen to twenty per cent fat. Their new diet was closer to forty per cent fat. Famine, which had long been a recurrent condition, gave way to permanent plenty, and so the Pima's "thrifty" genes, once an advantage, were now a liability. N.I.H. researchers are trying to find these genes, on the theory that they may be the same genes that contribute to obesity in the rest of us. Their studies at Sacaton have also uncovered valuable clues to how diabetes works, how obesity in pregnant women affects their children, and how human metabolism is altered by weight gain. All told, the collaboration between the N.I.H. and the Pima is one of the most fruitful relationships in modern medical science—with one fateful exception. After thirty-five years, no one has had any success helping the Pima lose weight. For all the prodding and poking, the hundreds of research papers describing their bodily processes, and the determined efforts of health workers, year after year the tribe grows fatter.

"I used to be a nurse, I used to work in the clinic, I used to be all gung ho about going out and teaching people about diabetics and obesity," Teresa Wall, who heads the tribe's public-health department, told me. "I thought that was all people needed—information. But they weren't interested. They had other issues." Wall is a Pima, short and stocky, who has long, straight black hair, worn halfway down her back. She spoke softly. "There's something missing. It's one thing to say to people, 'This is what you should do.' It's another to actually get them to take it in."

The Pima have built a new wellness center in downtown Sacaton, with a weight room and a gymnasium. They now have an education program on nutrition aimed at preschoolers and first graders, and at all tribal functions signs identify healthful food choices—a tray of vegetables or of fruit, say. They are doing, in other words, what public-health professionals are supposed to be doing. But results are hard to see.

"We've had kids who were diabetic, whose mothers had diabetes and were on dialysis and had died of kidney failure," one of the tribe's nutritionists told me. "You'd think that that would make a difference—that it would motivate them to keep their diet under control. It doesn't." She got up from her desk, walked to a bookshelf, and pulled out two bottles of Coca-Cola. One was an old glass bottle. The other was a modern plastic bottle, which towered over it. "The original Coke bottle, in the nineteen-thirties, was six and a half ounces." She held up the plastic bottle. "Now they are marketing one litre as a single serving. That's five times the original serving size. The McDonald's regular hamburger is two hundred and sixty calories, but now you've got the double cheeseburger, which is four hundred and forty-five calories. Portion sizes are getting way out of whack. Eating is not about hunger anymore. The fact that people are hungry is way down on the list of why they eat." I told her that I had come to Sacaton, the front lines of the weight battle, in order to find out what really works in fighting obesity. She looked at me and shrugged. "We're the last people who could tell you that," she said.

In the early nineteen-sixties, at about the time the N.I.H. team stumbled on the Pima, seventeen per cent of middle-aged Americans met the clinical definition of obesity. Today, that figure is 32.3 per cent. Between the early nineteen-seventies and the early nineteen-nineties, the percentage of preschool girls who were overweight went from 5.8 per cent to ten per cent. The number of Americans who fall into what epidemiologists call Class Three Obesity—that is, people too grossly overweight, say, to fit into an airline seat—has risen three hundred and fifty per cent in the past thirty years. "We've looked at trends by educational level, race, and ethnic group, we've compared smokers and non-smokers, and it's very hard to say that there is any group that is not experiencing this kind of weight gain," Katherine Flegal, a senior research epidemiologist at the National Center for Health Statistics, says. "It's all over the world. In China, the prevalence of obesity is vanishingly low, yet they are showing an increase. In Western Samoa, it is very high, and they are showing an increase." In the same period, science has unlocked many of obesity's secrets, the American public has been given a thorough education in the principles of good nutrition, health clubs have sprung up from one end of the country to another, dieting has become a religion, and health food a marketing phenomenon. None of it has mattered. It is the Pima paradox: in the fight against obesity all the things that worked in curbing behaviors like drunk driving and smoking and in encouraging things like safe sex and the use of seat belts—education, awareness, motivation—don't seem to work. For one reason or another, we cannot stop eating. "Since many people cannot lose much weight no matter how hard they try, and promptly regain whatever they do lose," the editors of *The New England Journal of Medicine* wearily concluded last month, "the vast amount of money spent on diet clubs, special foods and over-the-counter remedies, estimated to be on the order of $30 billion to $50 billion yearly, is wasted." Who could argue? If the Pima—who are surrounded by the immediate and tangible consequences of obesity, who have every conceivable motivation—can't stop themselves from eating their way to illness, what hope is there for the rest of us?



In the scientific literature, there is something called Gourmand Syndrome—a neurological condition caused by anterior brain lesions and characterized by an unusual passion for eating. The syndrome was described in a recent issue of the journal *Neurology*, and the irrational, seemingly uncontrollable obsession with food evinced by its victims seems a perfect metaphor for the irrational, apparently uncontrollable obsession with food which seems to have overtaken American society as a whole. Here is a diary entry from a Gourmand Syndrome patient, a fifty-five-year-old stroke victim who had previously displayed no more than a perfunctory interest in food:

> After I could stand on my feet again, I dreamt to go downtown and sit down in this well-known restaurant. There I would get a beer, sausage, and potatoes. Slowly my diet improved again and thus did quality of life. The day after discharge, my first trip brought me to this restaurant, and here I order potato salad, sausage, and a beer. I feel wonderful. My spouse anxiously registers everything I eat and nibble. It irritates me. A few steps down the street, we enter a coffee-house. My hand is reaching for a pastry, my wife's hand reaches between. Through the window I see my bank. If I choose, I could buy all the pastry I wanted, including the whole store. The creamy pastry slips from the foil like a mermaid. I take a bite.

IS there an easy way out of this problem? Every year, millions of Americans buy books outlining new approaches to nutrition and diet, nearly all of which are based on the idea that overcoming our obsession with food is really just a matter of technique: that the right foods eaten in the right combination can succeed where more traditional approaches to nutrition have failed. A cynic would say, of course, that the seemingly endless supply of these books proves their lack of efficacy, since if one of these diets actually worked there would be no need for another. But that's not quite fair. After all, the medical establishment, too, has been giving Americans nutritional advice without visible effect. We have been told that we must not take in more calories than we burn, that we cannot lose weight if we don't exercise consistently, that an excess of eggs, red meat, cheese, and fried food clogs arteries, that fresh vegetables and fruits help to ward off cancer, that fibre is good and sugar is bad and whole-wheat bread is better than white bread. That few of us are able to actually follow this advice is either our fault or the fault of the advice. Medical orthodoxy, naturally, tends toward the former position. Diet books tend toward the latter. Given how often the medical orthodoxy has been wrong in the past, that position is not, on its face, irrational. It's worth finding out whether it is true.

Arguably the most popular diet of the moment, for example, is one invented by the biotechnology entrepreneur Barry Sears. Sears's first book, "The Zone," written with Bill Lawren, sold a million and a half copies and has been translated into fourteen languages. His second book, "Mastering the Zone," was on the best-seller lists for eleven weeks. Madonna is rumored to be on the Zone diet, and so are Howard Stern and President Clinton, and if you walk into almost any major bookstore in the country right now Sears's two best-sellers—plus a new book, "Zone Perfect Meals in Minutes"—will quite likely be featured on a display table near the front. They are ambitious books, filled with technical discussions of food chemistry, metabolism, evolutionary theory, and obscure scientific studies, all apparently serving as proof of the idea that through careful management of "the most powerful and ubiquitous drug we have: food" we can enter a kind of high-efficiency, optimal metabolic state—the Zone.

The key to entering the Zone, according to Sears, is limiting your carbohydrates. When you eat carbohydrates, he writes, you stimulate the production of insulin, and insulin is a hormone that

> evolved to put aside excess carbohydrate calories in the form of fat in case of future famine. So the insulin that's stimulated by excess carbohydrates aggressively promotes the accumulation of body fat. In other words, when we eat too much carbohydrate, we're essentially sending a hormonal message, via insulin, to the body (actually to the adipose cells). The message: "Store fat."

His solution is a diet in which carbohydrates make up no more than forty per cent of all calories consumed (as opposed to the fifty per cent or more consumed by most Americans), with fat and protein coming to thirty per cent each. Maintaining that precise four-to-three ratio between carbohydrates and protein is, in Sears's opinion, critical for keeping insulin in check. "The Zone" includes all kinds of complicated instructions to help readers figure out how to do things like calculate their precise protein requirements in restaurants. ("Start with the protein, using the palm of your hand as a guide. The amount of protein that can fit into your palm is usually four protein blocks. That's about one chicken breast or 4 ounces sliced turkey.")

"Well, if I felt blue all the time and I found out that Mike Wallace felt blue all the time, it would make me feel lots better."

• •

It should be said that the kind of diet Sears suggests is perfectly nutritious. Following the Zone diet, you'll eat lots of fibre, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, and fish, and very little red meat. Good nutrition, though, isn't really the point. Sears's argument is that being in the Zone can induce permanent weight loss—that by controlling carbohydrates and the production of insulin you can break your obsession with food and fundamentally alter the way your body works. "Weight loss . . . can be an ongoing and usually frustrating struggle for most people," he writes. "In the Zone it is painless, almost automatic."

Does the Zone exist? Yes and no. Certainly, if people start eating a more healthful diet they'll feel better about themselves. But the idea that there is something magical about keeping insulin within a specific range is a little strange. Insulin is simply a hormone that regulates the storage of energy. Precisely how much insulin you need to store carbohydrates is dependent on all kinds of things, including how fit you are and whether, like many diabetics, you have a genetic predisposition toward insulin resistance. Generally speaking, the heavier and more out of shape you are, the more insulin your body needs to do its job. The Pima have a problem with obesity and that makes their problem with diabetes worse—not the other way around. High levels of insulin are the result of obesity. They aren't the cause of obesity. When I read the insulin section of "The Zone" to Gerald Reaven, an emeritus professor of medicine at Stanford University, who is acknowledged to be the country's leading insulin expert, I could hear him grinding his teeth. "I had the experience of being on a panel discussion with Sears, and I couldn't believe the stuff that comes out of this guy's mouth," he said. "I think he's full of it."

What Sears would have us believe is that when it comes to weight loss your body treats some kinds of calories differently from others—that the combination of the food we eat is more critical than the amount. To this end, he cites what he calls an "amazing" and "landmark" study published in 1956 in the British medical journal *Lancet*. (It should be a tipoff that the best corroborating research he can come up with here is more than forty years old.) In the study, a couple of researchers compared the effects of two different thousand-calorie diets—the first high in fat and protein and low in carbohydrates, and the second low in fat and protein and high in carbohydrates—on two groups of obese men. After eight to ten days, the men on the low-carbohydrate diet had lost more weight than the men on the high-carbohydrate diet. Sears concludes from the study that if you want to lose weight you should eat protein and shun carbohydrates. Actually, it shows nothing of the sort. Carbohydrates promote water retention; protein acts like a diuretic. Over a week or so, someone on a high-protein diet will always look better than someone on a high-carbohydrate diet, simply because of dehydration. When a similar study was conducted several years later, researchers found that after about three weeks—when the effects of dehydration had evened out—the weight loss on the two diets was virtually identical. The key isn't how you eat, in other words; it's how much you eat. Calories, not carbohydrates, are still what matters. The dirty little secret of the Zone system is that, despite Sears's expostulations about insulin, all he has done is come up with another low-calorie diet. He doesn't do the math for his readers, but some nutritionists have calculated that if you follow Sears's prescriptions religiously you'll take in at most seventeen hundred calories a day, and at seventeen hundred calories a day virtually anyone can lose weight. The problem with low-calorie diets, of course, is that no one can stay on them for very long. Just ask Sears. "Diets based on choice restriction and calorie limits usually fail," he writes in the second chapter of "The Zone," just as he is about to present his own choice-restricted and calorie-limited diet. "People on restrictive diets get tired of feeling hungry and deprived. They go off their diets, put the weight back on (primarily, as increased body fat) and then feel bad about themselves for not having enough will power, discipline, or motivation."

These are not, however, the kinds of contradiction that seem to bother Sears. His first book's dust jacket claims that in the Zone you can "reset your genetic code" and "burn more fat watching TV than by exercising." By the time he's finished, Sears has held up his diet as the answer to virtually every medical ill facing Western society, from heart disease to cancer and on to alcoholism and PMS. He writes, "Dr. Paul Kahl, the same physician with whom I did the AIDS pilot study"—yes, Sears's diet is just the thing for AIDS, too—"told me the story of one of his patients, a fifty-year-old woman with MS."

> Paul put her on a Zone-favorable diet, and after a few months on the program she came in for a checkup. Paul asked the basic question: "How are you feeling?" Her answer was "Great!" Noticing that she was still using a cane for stability, Paul asked her, "If you're feeling so great, why are you still using the cane?" Her only response was that since developing MS she always had. Paul took the cane away and told her to walk to the end of the hallway and back. After a few tentative steps, she made the round trip quickly. When Paul asked her if she wanted her cane back, she just smiled and told him to keep it for someone who really needed it.

Put down your carbohydrates and walk!

It is hard, while reading this kind of thing, to escape the conclusion that what is said in a diet book somehow matters less than how it's said. Sears, after all, isn't the only diet specialist who seems to be making things up. They all seem to be making things up. But if you read a large number of popular diet books in succession, what is striking is that they all seem to be making things up in precisely the same way. It is as if the diet-book genre had an unspoken set of narrative rules and conventions, and all that matters is how skillfully those rules and conventions are adhered to. Sears, for example, begins fearful and despondent, his father dead of a heart attack at fifty-three, a "sword of Damocles" over his head. Judy Moscovitz, author of "The Rice Diet Report" (three months on the *Times* best-seller list), tells us, "I was always the fattest kid in the class, and I knew all the pain that only a fat kid can know. . . . I was always the last one reluctantly chosen for the teams." Martin Katahn, in his best-seller "The Rotation Diet," writes, "I was one of those fat kids who had no memory of ever being thin. Instead, I have memories such as not being able to run fast

---

SHOWCASE BY MAX VADUKUL

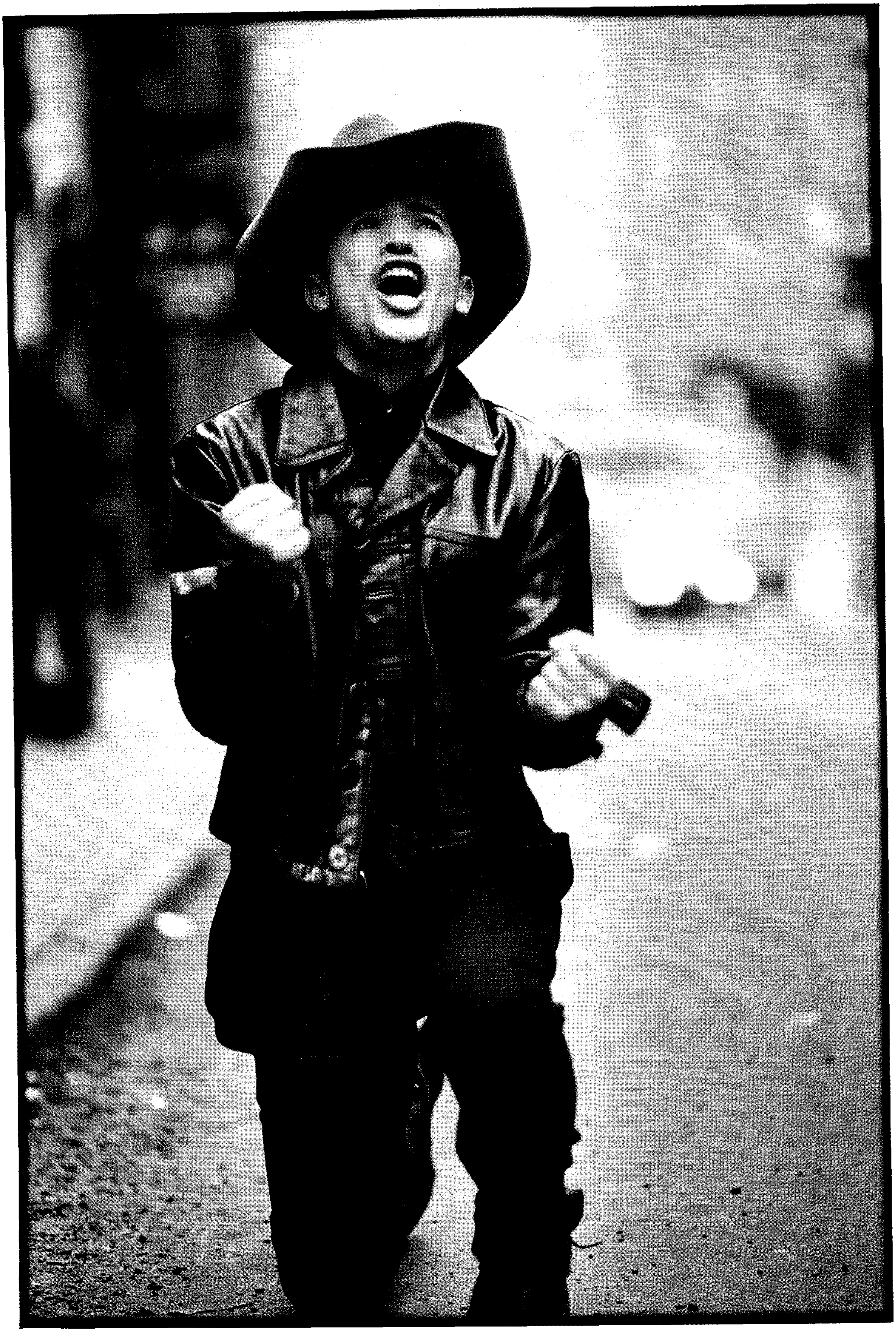
LAUGH ATTACK

As a Latino growing up in New York, John Leguizamo went through Hell in a gasoline sports coat and lived to laugh about it. "You gotta be charming, man," he says, speaking of the street thugs and the hectoring swarm of relatives he finessed with his antics. "If you have a lot of fancy footwork, they can't come at ya. You disarm them." Whippet-thin and street-savvy, the talented Leguizamo, who in high school was voted Most Likely to Be Most Talkative, has been cutting up ever since. His earlier one-man shows, "Mambo Mouth" and "Spic-O-Rama," won him rave reviews and a Hollywood movie career. Over the last few years, he has been a gangster in "Carlito's Way"; a transvestite in "To Wong Foo, Thanks for Everything! Julie Newmar"; a flatulent clown from Hell in "Spawn"; and the fiery Tybalt in "Romeo and Juliet." But the gaudy jack-in-the-box version of himself that he plays onstage is his tour de force.

His newest one-man enterprise, "Freak," is billed as a "semi-demi-quasi-pseudo autobiography"; it's a riotous sojourn down Latino memory lane (at the Cort Theatre, on Broadway; opening February 12th). For Leguizamo, the show is an antidote to his Los Angeles adventure. "It was getting kind of empty and shallow," he says. "I had to do something to grab me by the balls of my soul.' "

Leguizamo is a terrific mimic, and he moves like a point guard. In "Freak," he sometimes talks to the audience directly about his turbulent childhood; at other times, with his protean panache, he inhabits the friends and relatives who crowd his memory. He's an actor with a comedian's way with words. He describes the avocado-colored walls and the orange mohair carpet of his parents' house: "They were trying to re-create the inside of a papaya." Among the many anecdotes he offers up is one about losing his virginity at the Forty-second Street Kentucky Fried Chicken where he once worked. "I found out what the eighth ingredient was," he says.

—JOHN LAHR



"Do you want to stay for the credits?"

enough to keep up with my playmates, being chosen last for all games that required physical movement."

Out of that darkness comes light: the Eureka Moment, when the author explains how he stumbled on the radical truth that inspired his diet. Sears found himself in the library of the Boston University School of Medicine, reading everything he could on the subject: "I had no preconceptions, no base of knowledge to work from, so I read everything. I eventually came across an obscure report . . ." Rachael Heller, who was a co-author of the best-selling "The Carbohydrate Addict's Diet" (and, incidentally, so fat growing up that she was "always the last one picked for the team"), was at home in bed when her doctor called, postponing her appointment and thereby setting in motion an extraordinary chain of events that involved veal parmigiana, a Greek salad, and two French crullers: "I will always be grateful for that particular arrangement of circumstances. . . . Sometimes we are fortunate enough to recognize and take advantage of them, sometimes not. This time I did. I believe it saved my life." Harvey Diamond, the co-author of the three-million-copy-selling "Fit for Life," was at a music festival two thousand miles from home, when he happened to overhear two people in front of him discussing the theories of a friend in Santa Barbara: " 'Excuse me,' I interrupted, 'who is this fellow you are discussing?' In less than twenty-four hours I was on my way to Santa Barbara. Little did I know that I was on the brink of one of the most remarkable discoveries of my life."

The Eureka Moment is followed, typically within a few pages, by the Patent Claim—the point at which the author shows why his Eureka Moment, which explains how weight can be lost without sacrifice, is different from the Eureka Moment of all those other diet books explaining how weight can be lost without sacrifice. This is harder than it appears. Dieters are actually attracted to the idea of discipline, because they attribute their condition to a failure of discipline. It's just that they know themselves well enough to realize that if a diet requires discipline they won't be able to follow it. At the same time, of course, even as the dieter realizes that what he is looking for—discipline without the discipline—has never been possible, he still clings to the hope that someday it might be. The Patent Claim must negotiate both paradoxes. Here is Sears, in his deft six-paragraph Patent Claim: "These are not unique claims. The proponents of every new diet that comes along say essentially the same thing. But if you're reading this book, you probably know that these diets don't really work." Why don't they work? Because they "violate the basic biochemical laws required to enter the Zone." Other diets don't have discipline. The Zone does. Yet, he adds, "The beauty of the dietary system presented in this book is that . . . it doesn't call for a great deal of the kind of unrealistic self-sacrifice that causes many people to fall off the diet wagon. . . . In fact, I can even show you how to stay within these dietary guidelines while eating at fast-food restaurants." It is the very discipline of the Zone system that allows its adherent to lose weight without discipline.

Or consider this from Adele Puhn's recent runaway best-seller, "The 5-Day Miracle Diet." America's No. 1 diet myth, she writes, is that "you have to deprive yourself to lose weight":

> Even though countless diet programs have said you can have your cake and eat it, too, in your heart of hearts, you have that "nibbling" doubt: For a diet to really work, you have to sacrifice. I know. I bought into this myth for a long time myself. And the fact is that on every other diet, deprivation is involved. Motivation can only take you so far. Eventually you're going to grab for that extra piece of cake, that box of cookies, that cheeseburger and fries. But not the 5-Day Miracle Diet.

Let us pause and savor the five-hundred-and-forty-degree rhetorical triple gainer taken in those few sentences: (1) the idea that diet involves sacrifice is a myth; (2) all diets, to be sure, say that on their diets dieting without sacrifice is not a myth; (3) but you believe that dieting without sacrifice is a myth; (4) and I, too, believed that dieting without sacrifice is a myth; (5) because in fact on all diets dieting without sacrifice is a myth; (6) except on my diet, where dieting without sacrifice is not a myth.

The expository sequence that these books follow—last one picked, moment of enlightenment, assertion of the one true way—finally amounts to nothing less than a conversion narrative. In conception and execution, diet books are self-consciously theological. (Whom did Harvey Diamond meet after his impulsive, desperate mission to Santa Barbara? A man he will only identify, pseudonymously and mysteriously, as Mr. Jensen, an ethereal figure with "clear eyes, radiant skin, serene demeanor and well-proportioned body.") It is the appropriation of this religious narrative that permits the suspension of disbelief.

There is a more general explanation for all this in the psychological literature—a phenomenon that might be called the Photocopier Effect, after the experiments of the Harvard social scientist Ellen Langer. Langer examined the apparently common-sense idea that if you are trying to persuade someone to do something for you, you are always better off if you provide a reason. She went up to a group of people waiting in line to use a library copying machine and said, "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine?" Sixty per cent said yes. Then she repeated the experiment on another group, except that she changed her request to "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine, because I'm in a rush?" Ninety-four per cent said yes. This much sounds like common sense: if you say, "Because I'm in a rush"—if you explain your need—people are willing to step aside. But here's where the study gets interesting. Langer then did the experiment a third time, in this case replacing the specific reason with a statement of the obvious: "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine, because I have to make some copies?" The percentage who let her do so this time was almost exactly the same as the one in the previous round—ninety-three per cent. The key to getting people to say yes, in other words, wasn't the explanation "because I'm in a rush" but merely the use of the word "because." What mattered wasn't the substance of the explanation but merely the rhetorical form—the conjunctional footprint—of an explanation.

Isn't this how diet books work? Consider the following paragraph, taken at random from "The Zone":

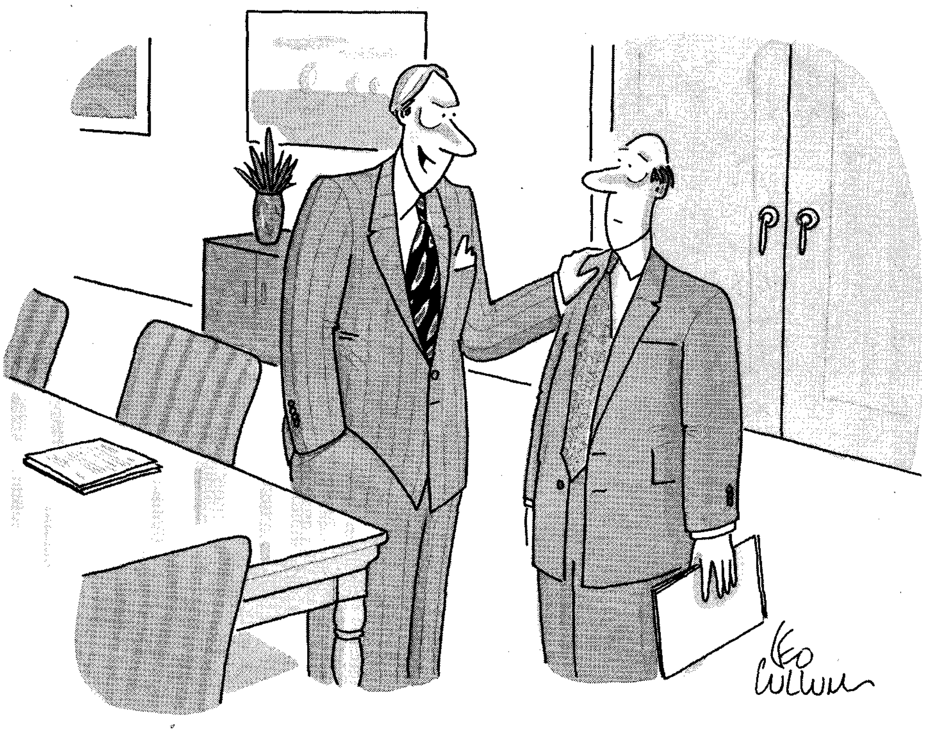
> In paracrine hormonal responses, the hormone travels only a very short distance from a secreting cell to a target cell. Because of the short distance between the secreting cell and the target cell, paracrine responses don't need the long-distance capabilities of the bloodstream. Instead, they use the body's version of a regional system: the paracrine system. Finally, there are the autocrine hormone systems, analogous to the cord that links the handset of the phone to the phone itself. Here the secreting cells release a hormone that comes immediately back to affect the secreting cell itself.

Don't worry if you can't follow what Sears is talking about here—following isn't really the point. It is enough that he is using the word "because."

If there is any book that defines the diet genre, however, it is "Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution." Here is the conversion narrative at its finest. Dr. Atkins, a humble corporate physician, is fat. ("I had three chins.") He begins searching for answers. ("One evening I read about the work that Dr. Garfield Duncan had done in nutrition at the University of Pennsylvania. Fasting patients, he reported, lose all sense of hunger after forty-eight hours without food. That *stunned* me. . . . That defied logic.") He tests his unorthodox views on himself. As if by magic, he loses weight. He tests his unorthodox views on a group of executives at A.T. & T. As if by magic, they lose weight. Incredibly, he has come up with a diet that "produces steady weight loss" while setting "no limit on the amount of food you can eat." In 1972, inspired by his vision, he puts pen to paper. The result is "Dr. Atkins' Diet Revolution," one of the fifty best-selling books of all time. In the early nineties, he publishes "Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution," which sells more than three million copies and is on the *Times* best-seller list for almost all of 1997. More than two decades of scientific research into health and nutrition have elapsed in the interim, but Atkins' message has remained the same. Carbohydrates are bad. Everything else is good. Eat the hamburger, hold the bun. Eat the steak, hold the French fries. Here is the list of ingredients for one of his breakfast "weight loss" recommendations: scrambled eggs for six. Keep in mind that Atkins is probably the most influential diet doctor in the world.

12 link sausages (be sure they contain no sugar)
1 3-ounce package cream cheese
1 tablespoon butter
3/4 cup cream
1/4 cup water
1 teaspoon seasoned salt
2 teaspoons parsley
8 eggs, beaten

Atkins' Patent Claim centers on the magical weight-loss properties of something called "ketosis." When you eat carbohydrates, your body converts them into glycogen and stores them for ready use. If you are deprived of carbohydrates, however, your body has to turn to its own stores of fat and muscle for energy. Among the intermediate metabolic products of this fat breakdown are ketones,

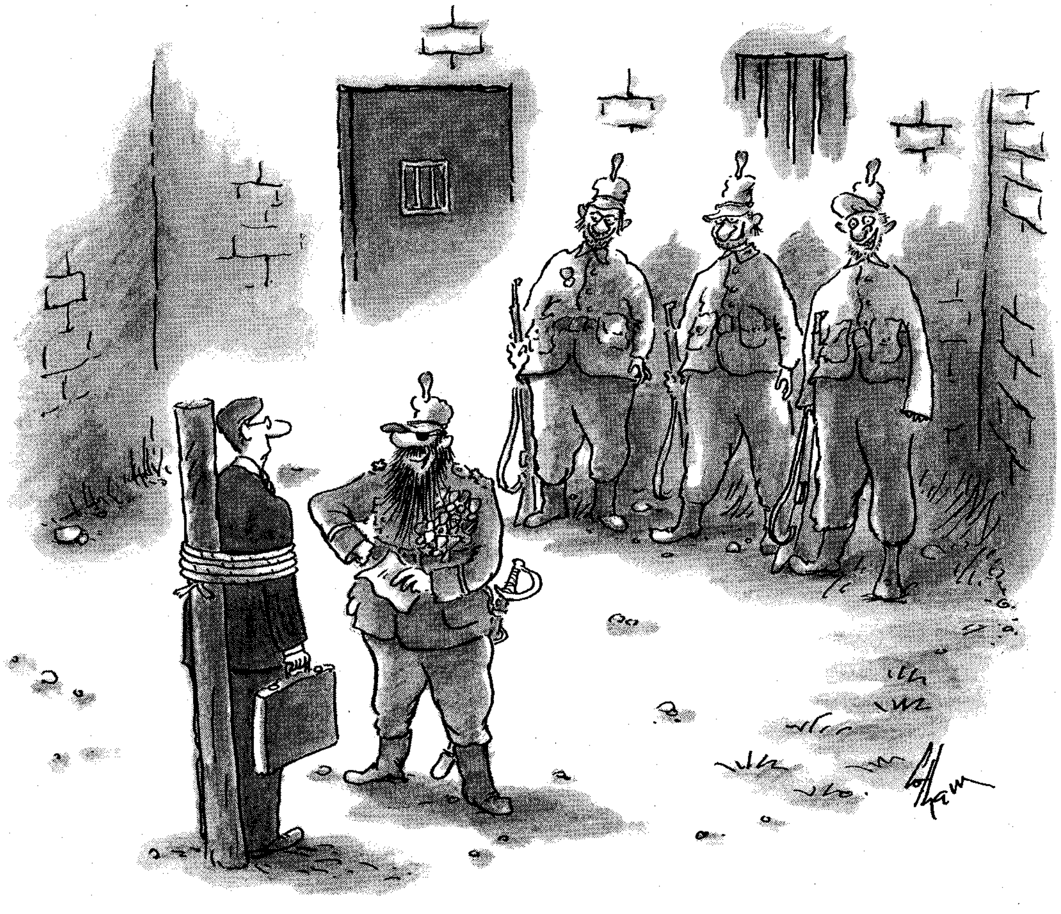


"My strength is as the strength of ten, because I'm rich."

and when you produce lots of ketones, you're in ketosis. Since an accumulation of these chemicals swiftly becomes toxic, your body works very hard to get rid of them, either through the kidneys, as urine, or through the lungs, by exhaling, so people in ketosis commonly spend a lot of time in the bathroom and have breath that smells like rotten apples. Ketosis can also raise the risk of bone fracture and cardiac arrhythmia and can result in light-headedness, nausea, and the loss of nutrients like potassium and sodium. There is no doubt that you can lose weight while you're in ketosis. Between all that protein and those trips to the bathroom, you'll quickly become dehydrated and drop several pounds just through water loss. The nausea will probably curb your appetite. And if you do what Atkins says, and suddenly cut out virtually all carbohydrates, it will take a little while for your body to compensate for all those lost calories by demanding extra protein and fat. The weight loss isn't permanent, though. After a few weeks your body adjusts, and the weight—and your appetite—comes back.

For Atkins, however, ketosis is as "delightful as sex and sunshine," which is why he wants dieters to cut out carbohydrates almost entirely. (To avoid bad breath he recommends carrying chlorophyll tablets and purse-size aerosol breath fresheners at all times; to avoid other complications, he recommends regular blood tests.) Somehow, he has convinced himself that his kind of ketosis is different from the bad kind of ketosis, and that his ketosis can actually lead to permanent weight loss. Why he thinks this, however, is a little unclear. In "Dr. Atkins' Diet Revolution" he thought that the key was in the many trips to the bathroom: "Hundreds of calories are sneaked out of your body every day in the form of ketones and a host of other incompletely broken down molecules of fat. You are disposing of these calories *not* by work or violent exercise—but just by breathing and allowing your kidneys to function. All this is achieved merely by cutting out your carbohydrates." Unfortunately, the year after that original edition of Atkins' book came out, the American Medical Association published a devastating critique of this theory, pointing out, among other things, that ketone losses in the urine and the breath rarely exceed a hundred calories a day—a quantity, the A.M.A. pointed out, "that could not possibly account for the dramatic results claimed for such diets." In "Dr. Atkins' New Diet Revolution," not surprisingly, he's become rather vague on the subject, mysteriously invoking something he calls Fat Mobilizing Substance. Last year, when I interviewed him, he offered a new hypothesis: that ketosis takes more energy than conventional food metabolism does, and that it is "a much less efficient pathway to burn up your calories via stored fat than it is via glucose." But he didn't want to be pinned down. "Nobody has really been able to work out that mechanism as well as I would have liked," he conceded.

Atkins is a big, white-haired man in his late sixties, well over six feet, with a barrel chest and a gruff, hard-edged voice. On the day we met, he was wearing a high-lapelled, four-button black suit. Given a holster and a six-shooter, he could have passed for the sheriff in a spaghetti Western. He is an intimidating figure, his manner brusque and impatient. He gives the impression that he doesn't like having to explain his theories, that he finds the details tedious and unnecessary. Given the Photocopier Effect, of course, he is quite right. The appearance of an explanation is more important than the explanation itself. But Atkins seems to take this principle farther than anyone else.



"The men are excited about getting to shoot a lawyer."

For example, in an attempt to convince his readers that eating pork chops, steaks, duck, and rack of lamb in abundance is good for them, Atkins points out that primitive Eskimo cultures had virtually no heart disease, despite a high-fat diet of fish and seal meat. But one obvious explanation for the Eskimo paradox is that cold-water fish and seal meat are rich in n-3 fatty acids—the "good" kind of fat. Red meat, on the other hand, is rich in saturated fat—the "bad" kind of fat. That dietary fats come in different forms, some of which are particularly bad for you and some of which are not, is the kind of basic fact that seventh graders are taught in Introduction to Nutrition. Atkins has a whole chapter on dietary fat in "New Diet Revolution" and doesn't make the distinction once. All diet-book authors profit from the Photocopier Effect. Atkins *lives* it.

I watched Atkins recently as he conducted his daily one-hour radio show on New York's WEVD. We were in a Manhattan town house in the East Fifties, where he has his headquarters, in a sleek, modernist office filled with leather furniture and soapstone sculpture. He sat behind his desk—John Wayne in headphones—as his producer perched in front of him. It was a bravura performance. He spoke quickly and easily, glancing at his notes only briefly, and then deftly gave counsel to listeners around the region.

The first call came from George, on his car phone. George told Atkins his ratio of triglycerides to cholesterol. It wasn't good. George was a very unhealthy man. "You're in big trouble," Atkins said. "You have to change your diet. What do you generally eat? What's your breakfast?"

"I've stopped taking junk foods," George says. "I don't eat eggs. I don't eat bacon."

"Then that's— See there." Atkins' voice rose in exasperation. "What do you have for breakfast?"

"I have skim milk, cereal, with banana."

"*That's three carbs!*" Atkins couldn't believe that in this day and age people were still consuming fruit and skim milk. "That's how you are getting into trouble! . . . What you need to do, George, seriously, is get ahold of 'New Diet Revolution' and just read what it says."

Atkins took another call. This time, it was from Robert, forty-one years old, three hundred pounds, and possessed of a formidable Brooklyn accent. He was desperate to lose weight—up on a ledge and wanting Atkins to talk him down. "I really don't know anything about dieting," he said. "I'm getting a little discouraged."

"It's really very easy," Atkins told him, switching artfully to the Socratic method. "Do you like meat?"

"Yes."

"Could you eat a steak?"

"Yes."

"All by itself, without any French fries?"

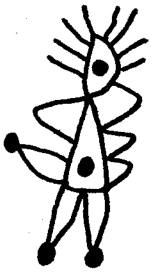
"Yes."

"And let's say we threw in a salad, but you couldn't have any bread or anything else."

"Yeah, I could do that."

"Well, if you could go through life like that. . . . Do you like eggs in the morning? Or a cheese omelette?"

"Yes," Robert said, his voice almost giddy with relief. He called expecting a life sentence of rice cakes. Now he was being sent forth to eat cheeseburgers. "Yes, I do!"



"If you just eat that way," Atkins told him, "you'll have eighty pounds off in six months."

When I first arrived at Atkins' headquarters, two members of his staff took me on a quick tour of the facility, a vast medical center, where Atkins administers concoctions of his own creation to people suffering from a variety of disorders. Starting from the fifth floor, we went down to the third, and then from the third to the second, taking the elevator each time. It's a small point, but it did strike me as odd that I should be in the headquarters of the world's most popular weight-loss expert and be taking the elevator one floor at a time. After watching Atkins' show, I was escorted out by his public-relations assistant. We were on the second floor. He pressed the elevator button, down. "Why don't we take the stairs?" I asked. It was just a suggestion. He looked at me and then at the series of closed doors along the corridor. Tentatively, he opened the second. "I think this is it," he said, and we headed down, first one flight and then another. At the base of the steps was a door. The P.R. man, a slender fellow in a beautiful Italian suit, peered through it: for the moment, he was utterly lost. We were in the basement. It seemed as if nobody had gone down those stairs in a long time.

WHY are the Pima so fat? The answer that diet books would give is that the Pima don't eat as well as they used to. But that's what is ultimately wrong with diet books. They talk as if food were the only cause of obesity and its only solution, and we know, from just looking at the Pima, that things are not that simple. The diet of the Pima is bad, but no worse than anyone else's diet.

Exercise is also clearly part of the explanation for why obesity has become epidemic in recent years. Half as many Americans walk to work today as did twenty years ago. Over the same period, the number of calories burned by the average American every day has dropped by about two hundred and fifty. But this doesn't explain why obesity has hit the Pima so hard, either, since they don't seem to be any less active than the rest of us.

The answer, of course, is that there is something beyond diet and exercise that influences obesity—that can make the consequences of a bad diet or of a lack of exercise much worse than they otherwise would be—and this is genetic inheritance. Claude Bouchard, a professor of social and preventive medicine at Laval University, in Quebec City, and one of the world's leading obesity specialists, estimates that we human beings probably carry several dozen genes that are directly related to our weight. "Some affect appetite, some affect satiety. Some affect metabolic rate, some affect the partitioning of excess energy in fat or lean tissue," he told me. "There are also reasons to believe that there are genes affecting physical-activity level." Bouchard did a study not long ago in which he took a group of men of similar height, weight, and life style and overfed them by a thousand calories a day, six days a week, for a hundred days. The average weight gain in the group was eighteen pounds. But the range was from nine to twenty-six pounds. Clearly, the men who gained just nine pounds were the ones whose genes had given them the fastest possible metabolism—the ones who burn the most calories in daily living and are the least efficient at storing fat. These are people who have the easiest time staying thin. The men at the other end of the scale are closer to the Pima in physiology. Their obesity genes thriftily stored away as much of the thousand extra calories a day as possible.

One of the key roles for genes appears to be in determining what obesity researchers refer to as setpoints. In the classic experiment in the field, researchers took a group of rats and made a series of lesions in the base of each rat's brain. As a result, the rats began overeating and ended up much more obese than normal rats. The first conclusion is plain: there is a kind of thermostat in the brain that governs appetite and weight, and if you change the setting on that thermostat appetite and weight will change accordingly. With that finding in mind, the researchers took a second step. They took those same brain-damaged rats and put them on a diet, severely limiting the amount of food they could eat. What happened? The rats didn't lose weight. In fact, after some initial fluctuations, they ended up at exactly the same weight as before. Only, this time, being unable to attain their new thermostat setting by eating, they reached it by becoming less active—by burning less energy.

Two years ago, a group at Rockefeller University in New York published a landmark study essentially duplicating in human beings what had been done years ago in rats. They found that if you lose weight your body responds by starting to conserve energy: your metabolism slows down; your muscles seem to work more efficiently, burning fewer calories to do the same work. "Let's say you have two people, side by side, and these people have exactly the same body composition," Jules Hirsch, a member of the Rockefeller team, says. "They both weigh a hundred and thirty pounds. But there is one difference—the first person maintains his weight effortlessly, while the second person, who used to weigh two hundred pounds, is trying to maintain a lower weight. The second will need fifteen per cent fewer calories per day to do his work. He needs less oxygen and will burn less energy." The body of the second person is backpedalling furiously in response to all that lost weight. It is doing everything it can to gain it back. In response to weight gain, by contrast, the Rockefeller team found that the body speeds up metabolism and burns more calories during exercise. It tries to lose that extra weight. Human beings, like rats, seem to have a predetermined setpoint, a weight that their body will go to great lengths to maintain.

One key player in this regulatory system may be a chemical called leptin—or, as it is sometimes known, Ob protein—whose discovery four years ago, by Jeff Friedman, of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute at Rockefeller University, prompted a flurry of headlines. In lab animals, leptin tells the brain to cut back on appetite, to speed up metabolism, and to burn stored fat. The theory is that the same mechanism may work in human beings. If you start to overeat, your fat cells will produce more leptin, so your body will do everything it can to get back to the setpoint. That's why after gaining a few pounds over the holiday season most of us soon return to our normal weight. But if you eat too little or exercise too much, the theory goes, the opposite happens: leptin levels fall. "This is probably the reason that virtually every weight-loss program known to man fails," José F. Caro, vice-president of endocrine research and clinical investigation at Eli Lilly & Company, told me. "You go to Weight Watchers. You start losing weight. You feel good. But then your fat cells stop producing leptin. Remember, leptin is the hormone that decreases appetite and increases energy expenditure, so just as you are trying to lose weight you lose the hormone that helps you lose weight."

Obviously, our body's fat thermostat doesn't keep us at one weight all our adult lives. "There isn't a single setpoint for a human being or an animal," Thomas Wadden, the director of the Weight and Eating Disorders Clinic at the University of Pennsylvania, told me. "The body will regulate a stable weight but at very different levels, depending on food intake—quality of the diet, high fat versus low fat, high sweet versus low sweet—and depending on the amount of physical activity." It also seems to be a great deal easier to move the setpoint up than to move it down—which, if you think about the Pima, makes perfect sense. In their long history in the desert, those Pima who survived were the ones who were very good at gaining weight during times of plenty—very good, in other words, at overriding the leptin system at the high end. But there would have been no advantage for the ones who were good at losing weight in hard times. The same is probably true for the rest of us, albeit in a less dramatic form. In our evolutionary history, there was advantage in being able to store away whatever calorific windfalls came our way. To understand this interplay between genes

AT THE MUSEUMS

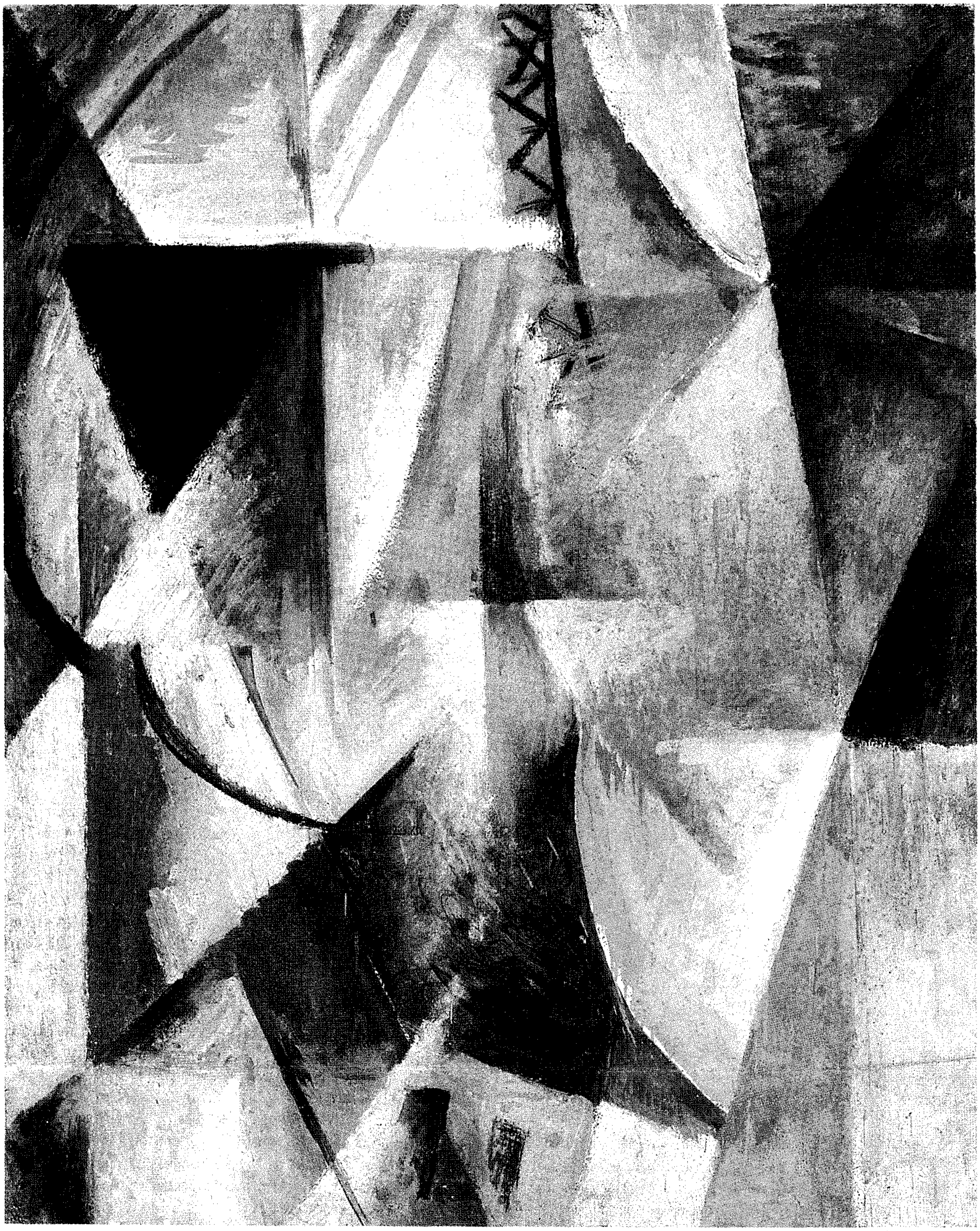
BROKEN WINDOW

In the years immediately preceding the First World War, when artists in several European countries were forging the new art of the twentieth century, the French painter Robert Delaunay struck many people as the man to watch. Although Wassily Kandinsky, working in Munich, and Frank Kupka, in Paris, took the plunge into total abstraction before he did, it was Delaunay's paintings of 1911-12 that captured the attention of the avant-garde and its polemical spokesman, the poet Guillaume Apollinaire. Apollinaire coined the term "Orphism" to describe the pure, non-objective, light-drenched extension of Cubism that Delaunay had invented.

The intense five-year odyssey that led to Delaunay's abstract breakthrough is laid out in an exhibition called "Visions of Paris: Robert Delaunay's Series," which opens at the Guggenheim on February 27th and runs through May 24th. Curated by Mark Rosenthal, it charts the steps by which, in four interconnected series of paintings done between 1909 and 1914, the artist first worked through what he called his "destructive" phase—in which the powerful forms of the Saint-Séverin Church, the Eiffel Tower, and the city of Paris itself are subjected to Cubist fragmentation and dislocation in turn—and then, in the next, "constructive" phase, went on to the great series of "Windows," where his forms dissolve into light, color, and atmosphere. This process is nearly complete in "A Window" (right), a study for a larger picture called "The Three Windows." Here, line and volume have been done away with, and space is evoked by variations in tone; it is a painting constructed with color alone. The only remaining trace of the material world is a gridlike section of the Eiffel Tower, a symbol of modernism that is like a leitmotiv in Delaunay's paintings of this period. Less than a year later, he took the final step with his "Disk" paintings: the first total abstractions by a French artist.

—Calvin Tomkins

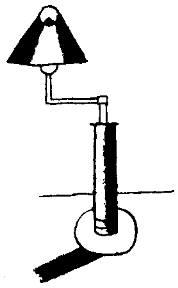
COLLECTION CENTRE GEORGES POMPIDOU



and environment, imagine two women, both five feet five. The first might have a setpoint range of a hundred and ten to a hundred and fifty pounds; the second a range of a hundred and twenty-five to a hundred and eighty. The difference in the ranges of the two women is determined by their genes. Where they are in that range is determined by their life styles.

Not long after leptin was discovered, researchers began testing obese people for the hormone, to see whether a fat person was fat because his body didn't produce enough leptin. They found the opposite: fat people had lots of leptin. Some of the researchers thought this meant that the leptin theory was wrong—that leptin didn't do what it was supposed to do. But some other scientists now think that as people get fatter and fatter, their bodies simply get less and less sensitive to leptin. The body still pumps out messages to the brain calling for the metabolism to speed up and the appetite to shrink, but the brain just doesn't respond to those messages with as much sensitivity as it did. This is probably why it is so much easier to gain weight than it is to lose it. The fatter you get, the less effective your own natural weight-control system becomes.

This doesn't mean that diets can't work. In those instances in which dieters have the discipline and the will power to restrict their calories permanently, to get regular and vigorous exercise, and to fight the attempt by their own bodies to maintain their current weight, pounds can be lost. (There is also some evidence that if you can keep weight off for an extensive period—three years, say—a lower setpoint can be established.) Most people, though, don't have that kind of discipline, and even if they do have it the amount of weight that most dieters can expect to lose on a permanent basis may be limited by their setpoint range. The N.I.H. has a national six-year diabetes-prevention study going on right now, in which it is using a program of intensive, one-on-one counselling, dietary modification, and two and a half hours of exercise weekly to see if it can get overweight volunteers to lose seven per cent of their body weight. If that sounds like a modest goal, it should. "A lot of studies look at ten-per-cent weight loss," said Mary Hoskin, who is coördinating the section of the N.I.H. study involving the Pima. "But if you look at long-term weight loss nobody can maintain ten per cent. That's why we did seven."



On the other hand, now that we're coming to understand the biology of weight gain, it is possible to conceive of diet drugs that would actually work. If your body sabotages your diet by lowering leptin levels as you lose weight, why not give extra leptin to people on diets? That's what a number of drug companies, including Amgen and Eli Lilly, are working on now. They are trying to develop a leptin or leptin-analogue pill that dieters could take to fool their bodies into thinking they're getting fatter when they're actually getting thinner. "It is very easy to lose weight," José Caro told me. "The difficult thing is to maintain your weight loss. The thinking is that people fail because their leptin goes down. Here is where replacement therapy with leptin or an Ob-protein analogue might prevent the relapse. It is a subtle and important concept. What it tells you is that leptin is not going to be a magic bullet that allows you to eat whatever you want. You have to initiate the weight loss. Then leptin comes in."

Another idea, which the Hoffmann-La Roche company is exploring, is to focus on the problems obese people have with leptin. Just as Type II diabetics can become resistant to insulin, many overweight people may become resistant to leptin. So why not try to resensitize them? The idea is to find the leptin receptor in the brain and tinker with it to make it work as well in a fat person as it does in a thin person. (Drug companies have actually been pursuing the same strategy with the insulin receptors of diabetics.) Arthur Campfield, who heads the leptin project for Roche, likens the process by which leptin passes the signal about fat to the brain to a firemen's bucket brigade, where water is passed from hand to hand. "If you have all tall people, you can pass the bucket and it's very efficient," he said. "But if two of the people in the chain are small children, then you're going to spill a lot of water and slow everything down. We want to take a tablet or a capsule that goes into your brain and puts a muscular person in the chain and overcomes that weakness. The elegant solution is to find the place in the chain where we are losing water."

The steps that take place in the brain when it receives the leptin message are known as the Ob pathway, and any number of these steps may lend themselves to pharmaceutical intervention. Using the Ob pathway to fight obesity represents a quantum leap beyond the kinds of diet drugs that have been available so far. Fen-phen, the popular medication removed from the market last year because of serious side effects, was, by comparison, a relatively crude product, which worked indirectly to suppress appetite. Hoffmann-La Roche is working now on a drug called Xenical, a compound that blocks the absorption of dietary fat by the intestine. You can eat fat; you just don't keep as much of it in your system. The drug is safe and has shown real, if modest, success in helping chronically obese patients lose weight. It will probably be the next big diet drug. But no one is pretending that it has anywhere near the potential of, say, a drug that would resensitize your leptin receptors.

Campfield talks about the next wave of drug therapy as the third leg of a three-legged stool—as the additional element that could finally make diet and exercise an easy and reliable way to lose weight. Wadden speaks of the new drugs as restoring sanity: "What I think will happen is that people on these medications will report that they are less responsive to their environment. They'll say that they are not as turned on by Wendy's or McDonald's. Food in America has become a recreational activity. It is divorced from nutritional need and hunger. We eat to kill time, to stimulate ourselves, to alter our mood. What these drugs may mean is that we're going to become less susceptible to these messages." In the past thirty years, the natural relationship between our bodies and our environment—a relation that was developed over thousands of years—has fallen out of balance. For people who cannot restore that natural balance themselves—who lack the discipline, the wherewithal, or, like the

Pima, the genes—drugs could be a way of restoring it for them.

REJECTED SPICE GIRLS
Tense Spice
Itchy Spice
Mensa Spice
Klepto Spice
Y-Chromosome Spice

SEVEN years ago, Peter Bennett, the epidemiologist who first stumbled on the Gila River Pima twenty-eight years earlier, led an N.I.H. expedition to Mexico's Sierra Madre Mountains. Their destination was a a tiny Indian community on the border of Sonora and Chihuahua, seven thousand feet above the desert. "I had known about their existence for at least fifteen years before that," Bennett says. "The problem was that I could never find anyone who knew much about them. In 1991, it just happened that we linked up with an investigator down in Mexico." The journey was a difficult one, but the Mexican government had just built a road linking Sonora and Chihuahua, so the team didn't have to make the final fifty- or sixty-mile trek on horseback. "They were clearly a group who have got along together for a very long time," Bennett recalls. "My reaction as a stranger going in was: Gee, I think these people are really very friendly, very coöperative. They seem to be interested in what we want to do, and they are willing to stick their arms out and let us take blood samples." He laughed. "Which is always a good sign."

The little town in the Sierra Madre is home to the Mexican Pima, the southern remnants of a tribe that once stretched from present-day Arizona down to central Mexico. Like the Pima of the Gila River reservation, they are farmers, living in small clusters of wood-and-adobe *rancherías* among the pine trees, cultivating beans, corn, and potatoes in the valleys. On that first trip, the N.I.H. team examined no more than a few dozen Pima. Since then, the team has been back five or six times, staying for as many as ten days at a time. Two hundred and fifty of the mountain Pima have now been studied. They have been measured and weighed, their blood sugar has been checked, and their kidneys and eyes have been examined for signs of damage. Genetic samples have been taken and their metabolism has been monitored. The Mexican Pima, it turns out, eat a diet consisting almost entirely of beans, potatoes, and corn tortillas, with chicken perhaps once a month. They take in twenty-two hundred calories a day, which is slightly more than the Pima of Arizona do. But on the average each of them puts in twenty-three hours a week of moderate to hard physical labor, whereas the average Arizona Pima puts in two hours. The Mexican Pima's rates of diabetes are normal. They are slightly shorter than their American counterparts. In weight, there is no comparison: "I would say they are thin," Bennett says. "*Thin*. Certainly by American standards."

There are, of course, a hundred reasons not to draw any great lessons from this. Subsistence farming is no way to make a living in America today, nor are twenty-three hours of hard physical labor feasible in a society where most people sit at a desk from nine to five. And even if the Arizona Pima wanted to return to the land, they couldn't. It has been more than a hundred years since the Gila River, which used to provide the tribe with fresh fish and with water for growing beans and squash, was diverted upstream for commercial farming. Yet there is value in the example of the Mexican Pima. People who work with the Pima of Arizona say that the biggest problem they have in trying to fight diabetes and obesity is fatalism—a sense among the tribe that nothing can be done, that the way things are is the way things have to be. It is possible to see in the attitudes of Americans toward weight loss the same creeping resignation. As the world grows fatter, and as one best-selling diet scheme after another inevitably fails, the idea that being slender is an attainable—or even an advisable—condition is slowly receding. Last month, when *The New England Journal of Medicine* published a study suggesting that the mortality costs of obesity had been overstated, the news was greeted with resounding relief, as if we were all somehow off the hook, as if the issue with obesity were only mortality and not the thousand ways in which being fat undermines our quality of life: the heightened risk of heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, cancer, arthritis, gallbladder disease, trauma, gout, blindness, birth defects, and other aches, pains, and physical indignities too numerous to mention. What we are in danger of losing in the epidemic of obesity is not merely our health but our memory of health. Those Indian towns high in the Sierra Madre should remind the people of Sacaton—and all the rest of us as well—that it is still possible, even for a Pima, to be fit. ♦

LIFE AND LETTERS

YOUR STORY, MY STORY

Thirty-five years after Sylvia Plath's death, England's poet laureate reveals the life they shared.

BY A. ALVAREZ

WHEN Sylvia Plath committed suicide, early in the morning on February 11, 1963, she ceased to be merely a poet and became, like Thomas Chatterton, a symbol, a warning, a myth. Their importance had very little to do with their work; it didn't matter that Chatterton was a precocious faker who wrote nothing now worth reading and Plath a genius at the height of her powers. For the Romantics, Chatterton was "the marvellous boy" who was destroyed by an indifferent public. (He was starving to death when he swallowed arsenic, in 1770.) For the feminists, Plath was a terrible example of the raw deal women must expect in a world dominated by men. Ted Hughes, they said, married her, then dumped her for another woman when she became troublesome, leaving her to cope on her own with their children and her demons.

I doubt that Plath would have seen herself that way. She was too talented and ambitious to want preferential treatment and, by the end, when the poems were pouring out unstoppably, sometimes three a day, she was too convinced of her achievement to need anyone's say-so. It was Hughes who was left with the consequences: public accusations of murder and treachery, his name hacked off her tombstone again and again.

Despite the provocation, he has kept silent. Since Plath's death, Hughes has become Britain's poet laureate—the first major poet to hold the post since Tennyson—and has published a dozen collections of poetry and five books of prose, as well as anthologies and a number of books for children. But he has written very little about his wife and nothing at all about their life together, and he refuses to speak to biographers or scholars or journalists.

Hughes in 1982. He seems never to have lost his sense of her.

Hughes's detractors read his silence as another sign of callousness; his supporters say that it is the only dignified way of coping with intrusiveness and malice. The publication of "Birthday Letters" shows that his reticence was for public consumption only and that in private for the last three decades he has been gradually telling himself the story of his life with Plath in poems.

"Birthday Letters" is an extraordinary book, a sequence of fairly short poems that reads like a novel even if what Plath called "the peanut-crunching crowd," who want the gossip and don't much care for poetry, may not be able to grasp the story in all its nuances from this book alone. Hughes's poems are full of references to hers—quotes, echoes, quick allusions. One or two—"The Rabbit Catcher," for example—are even straight rewritings, the same incident viewed from the other side of the mirror; in other words, they are scenes from a marriage, Hughes's take on the life they shared. Plath had written her own version; part of her genius lay in her ability to take any trivial domestic incident—a cut thumb, an unwanted visitor, a bruise—and infuse it with significance. Hughes is doing something similar, but his subject is Plath herself—how she looked and moved and talked, her pleasures, rages, uncanny dreams and many terrors, what was good between them and where it went wrong. He takes the bare bones on which the biographies have been hung—Cambridge, Spain, America, Devon—and does what no biographer, however diligent and impartial, could ever do: he describes what it felt like to be there with her.

Plath was a Fulbright Scholar at Cambridge when they met. This was in 1956, when life in England was still pinched and deprived, though she hated the unheated houses and lousy plumbing less than the snobbery and crushing putdowns. Hughes was not that kind of superior Englishman. Although he had been at Cambridge, he was a northerner, a country boy who knew about foxes and otters and hawks, and she had already fallen for his poetry before she met him. The attraction between them was mutual, their courtship brief and dramatic. For Hughes, Plath was "a new world. My new world," a land

ABOVE: CHRIS DAVIES/NETWORK; OPPOSITE: MORTIMER RARE BOOK ROOM, SMITH COLLEGE. © ESTATE OF AURELIA S. PLATH

The couple on their Paris honeymoon in 1956. The poems describe how Hughes led his wife back to her father's lair for the sake of poetry.

FULBRIGHT SCHOLARS

Where was it, in the Strand? A display
Of news items, in photographs.
For some reason I noticed it.
A picture of that year's intake
Of Fulbright Scholars. Just arriving—
Or arrived. Or some of them.
Were you among them? I studied it,
Not too minutely, wondering
Which of them I might meet.
I remember that thought. Not
Your face. No doubt I scanned particularly
The girls. Maybe I noticed you.
Maybe I weighed you up, feeling unlikely.
Noted your long hair, loose waves—
Your Veronica Lake bang. Not what it hid.
It would appear blond. And your grin.
Your exaggerated American
Grin for the cameras, the judges, the strangers,
the frighteners.
Then I forgot. Yet I remember
The picture: the Fulbright Scholars.
With their luggage? It seems unlikely.
Could they have come as a team? I was walking
Sore-footed, under hot sun, hot pavements.
Was it then I bought a peach? That's as I remember.
From a stall near Charing Cross station.
It was the first fresh peach I had ever tasted.
I could hardly believe how delicious.
At twenty-five I was dumbfounded afresh
By my ignorance of the simplest things.

FIDELITY

It was somewhere to live. I was
Just hanging around, courting you,
Afloat on the morning tide and tipsy feelings
Of my twenty-fifth year. Gutted, restyled
À la mode, the Alexandra House
Became a soup kitchen. Those were the days
Before the avant-garde of coffee bars.
The canteen clatter of the British Restaurant,
One of the war's utility leftovers,
Was still the place to repair the nights with
breakfasts.
But Alexandra House was the place to be seen in.
The girls that helped to run it lived above it
With a retinue of loose-lifers, day-sleepers
Exhausted with night-owling. Somehow
I got a mattress up there, in a top room,
Overlooking Petty Cury. A bare
Mattress, on bare boards, in a bare room.
All I had, my notebook and that mattress.
Under the opening, bud-sticky chestnuts,
On into June, my job chucked, I laboured
Only at you, squandering all I'd saved.
Free of University I dangled
In its liberties. Every night
I slept on that mattress, under one blanket,
With a lovely girl, escaped freshly
From her husband to the frontier exposure
Of work in the soup kitchen. What
Knighthood possessed me there? I think of it
As a kind of time that cannot pass,
That I never used, so still possess.
She and I slept in each other's arms,
Naked and easy as lovers, a month of nights,
Yet never once made love. A holy law
Had invented itself, somehow, for me.
But she too served it, like a priestess,
Tender, kind and stark naked beside me.
She traced out the fresh rips you had inscribed
Across my back, seeming to join me
In my obsession, in my concentration,
To keep my preoccupation intact.
She never once invited, never tempted.
And I never stirred a finger beyond
Sisterly comforting. I was like her sister.
It never seemed unnatural. I was focussed,
So locked onto you, so brilliantly,
Everything that was not you was blind-spot.
I still puzzle over it—doubtful, now,
Whether to envy myself, or pity. Her friend,
Who had a bigger room, was wilder.
We moved in with her. That lofty room
Became a dormitory and HQ
Alternative to St. Botolph's. Plump and pretty,
With a shameless gap-tooth laugh, her friend
Did all she could to get me inside her.
And you will never know what a battle
I fought to keep the meaning of my words
Solid with the world we were making.
I was afraid, if I lost that fight
Something might abandon us. Lifting
Each of those naked girls, as they smiled at me
In their early twenties, I laid them
Under the threshold of our unlikely future
As those who wanted protection for a new home
Used to bury, under the new threshold,
A sinless child.

A PINK WOOL KNITTED DRESS

In your pink wool knitted dress
Before anything had smudged anything
You stood at the altar. Bloomsday.

Rain—so that a just bought umbrella
Was the only furnishing about me
Newer than three years inured.
My tie—sole, drab, veteran R.A.F. black—
Was the used-up symbol of a tie.
My cord jacket—thrice-dyed black, exhausted,
Just hanging on to itself.

I was a post-war, utility son-in-law!
Not quite the Frog-Prince. Maybe the Swineherd
Stealing this daughter's pedigree dreams
From under her watchtowered searchlit future.

No ceremony could conscript me
Out of my uniform. I wore my whole wardrobe—
Except for the odd, spare, identical item.
My wedding, like Nature, wanted to hide.
However—if we were going to be married
It had better be Westminster Abbey. Why not?
The Dean told us why not. That is how
I learned that I had a Parish Church.
St. George of the Chimney Sweeps.
So we squeezed into marriage finally.
Your mother, brave even in this
U.S. Foreign Affairs gamble,
Acted all bridesmaids and all guests,
Even—magnanimity—represented
My family
Who had heard nothing about it.
I had invited only their ancestors.
I had not even confided my theft of you
To a closest friend. For Best Man—my squire
To hold the meanwhile rings—
We requisitioned the sexton. Twist of the outrage:
He was packing children into a bus,
Taking them to the Zoo—in that downpour!
All the prison animals had to be patient
While we married.

You were transfigured.
So slender and new and naked,
A nodding spray of wet lilac.
You shook, you sobbed with joy, you were ocean depth
Brimming with God.
You said you saw the heavens open
And show riches, ready to drop upon us.
Levitated beside you, I stood subjected
To a strange tense: the spellbound future.

In that echo-gaunt, weekday chancel
I see you
Wrestling to contain your flames
In your pink wool knitted dress
And in your eye-pupils—great cut jewels
Jostling their tear-flames, truly like big jewels
Shaken in a dice-cup and held up to me.

A DREAM

Your worst dream
Came true: that ring on the doorbell—
Not a simple chance in a billion
But a meteorite, straight down our chimney,
With our name on it.

Not dreams, I had said, but fixed stars
Govern a life. A thirst of the whole being,
Inexorable, like a sleeper drawing
Air into the lungs. You had to lift
The coffin lid an inch.
In your dream or mine? Strange letter box.
You took out the envelope. It was
A letter from your Daddy. "I'm home.
Can I stay with you?" I said nothing.
For me, a request was a command.

Then came the Cathedral.
Chartres. Somehow we had got to Chartres.
Not the first time for you.
I remember little
But a Breton jug. You filled it
With everything we had. Every last franc.
You said it was for your mother.
You emptied our oxygen
Into that jug. Chartres
(I salvaged this)
Hung about your face, a mantilla,
Blackened, a tracery of char—
As after a firestorm. Nun-like
You nursed what was left of your Daddy.

Pouring our lives out of that jug
Into his morning coffee. Then you smashed it
Into shards, crude stars,
And gave them to your mother.

"And for you," you said to me, "permission
To remember this dream. And think about it."

THE LITERARY LIFE

We climbed Marianne Moore's narrow stair
To her bower-bird bric-a-brac nest, in Brooklyn.
Daintiest curio relic of Americana.
Her talk, a needle
Unresting—darning incessantly
Chain-mail with crewelwork flowers,
Birds and fish of the reef
In phosphor-bronze wire.
Her face, tiny American treen bobbin
On a spindle,
Her voice the flickering hum of the old wheel.
Then the coin, compulsory,
For the subway
Back to our quotidian scramble.
Why shouldn't we cherish her?

You sent her carbon copies of some of your poems.
Everything about them—
The ghost gloom, the constriction,
The bell-jar air-conditioning—made her gasp
For oxygen and cheer. She sent them back.
(Whoever has her letter has her exact words.)
"Since these seem to be valuable carbon copies
(Somewhat smudged) I shall not engross them."
I took the point of that "engross"
Precisely, like a bristle of glass,
Snapped off deep in my thumb.
You wept
And hurled yourself down a floor or two
Further from the Empyrean.
I carried you back up.
And she, Marianne, tight, brisk,
Neat and hard as an ant,
Slid into the second or third circle
Of my Inferno.

A decade later, on her last visit to England,
Holding court at a party, she was sitting
Bowed over her knees, her face,
Under her great hat-brim's floppy petal,
Dainty and bright as a piece of confetti—
She wanted me to know, she insisted
(It was all she wanted to say)
With that Missouri needle, drawing each stitch
Tight in my ear,
That your little near-posthumous memoir
"OCEAN 1212"
Was "so wonderful, so lit, so wonderful"—

She bowed so low I had to kneel. I kneeled and
Bowed my face close to her upturned face
That seemed tinier than ever,
And studied, as through a grille,
Her lips that put me in mind of a child's purse
Made of the skin of a dormouse,
Her cheek, as if she had powdered the crumpled silk
Of a bat's wing.
And I listened, heavy as a graveyard
While she searched for the grave
Where she could lay down her little wreath.

THE MINOTAUR

The mahogany tabletop you smashed
Had been the broad plank top
Of my mother's heirloom sideboard—
Mapped with the scars of my whole life.

That came under the hammer.
The high stool you swung that day
Demented by my being
Twenty minutes late for baby-minding.

"Marvellous!" I shouted. "Go on,
Smash it into kindling.
That's the stuff you're keeping out of your poems!"
And later, considered and calmer,

"Get that shoulder under your stanzas
And we'll be away." Deep in the cave of your ear
The goblin snapped his fingers.
So what had I given him?

The bloody end of the skein
That unravelled your marriage,
Left your children echoing
Like tunnels in a labyrinth,

Left your mother a dead-end,
Brought you to the horned, bellowing
Grave of your risen father—
And your own corpse in it.

ROBBING MYSELF

I came over the snow—the packed snow
The ice-glaze hardened and polished,
Slithering the A-30, two hundred miles,
The road unnatural and familiar,
A road back into myself
After the cosmic disaster—
The worst snow and freeze-up for fifteen years,
Twenty miles an hour, over fallen heaven.

I came to the house
In the blue December twilight.
Just light enough
To fork up my potatoes, to unbed them
From my careful clamp. I shelled off their snowed-over coverlet.
They seemed almost warm in their straw.
They exhaled the sweetness
Of the hopes I'd dug into them. It was a nest
Secret, living, the eggs of my coming year,
Like my own plump litter, my secret family,
Little earthen embryos, little fists
And frowning brows and the old, new sleep-smell of earth.

I picked over my apples,
My Victorias, my Pig's Noses,
In the dark outhouse, and my fat Bramleys.
My spring prayers still solid,
My summer intact in spite of everything.
I filled for you
A sack of potatoes and a sack of apples.

And I inspected my gladioli bulbs
In the dusty loft, in their dry rags, hibernating
(I did not know they were freezing to death).

Then I crept through the house. You never knew
How I listened to our absence,
A ghostly trespasser, or my strange gloating
In that inlaid corridor, in the snow-blue twilight,
So precise and tender, a dark sapphire.
The front room, our crimson chamber,
With our white-painted bookshelves, our patient books,
The rickety walnut desk I paid six pounds for,
The horsehair Victorian chair I got for five shillings,
Waited only for us. It was so strange!
And the crimson cataract of our stair Wilton
Led up to caverns of twelfth-century silence
We had hardly disturbed, in our newness.
Listening there, at the bottom of the stair,
Under the snow-loaded house
Was like listening to the sleeping brain-life
Of an unborn baby.

The house made newly precious to me
By your last lonely weeks there, and your crying.
But sweet with cleanliness,
Tight as a plush-lined casket
In a safe
In the December dusk. And, shuttered by wintering boughs,
The stained church-windows glowed
As if the sun had sunk there, inside the church.

I listened, as I sealed it up from myself
(The twelve-hour ice-crawl ahead).

I peered awhile, as through the keyhole,
Into my darkened, hushed, safe casket
From which (I did not know)
I had already lost the treasure.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH

At your sixtieth birthday, in the cake's glow,
Ariel sits on your knuckle.
You feed it grapes, a black one, then a green one,
From between your lips pursed like a kiss.
Why are you so solemn? Everybody laughs

As if grateful, the whole reunion—
Old friends and new friends,
Some famous authors, your court of brilliant minds,
And publishers and doctors and professors,
Their eyes creased in delighted laughter—even

The late poppies laugh, one loses a petal.

The candles tremble their tips
Trying to contain their joy. And your Mummy
Is laughing in her nursing home. Your children
Are laughing from opposite sides of the globe.
Your Daddy

Laughs deep in his coffin. And the stars,
Surely the stars, too, shake with laughter.
And Ariel—
What about Ariel?
Ariel is happy to be here.

Only you and I do not smile.

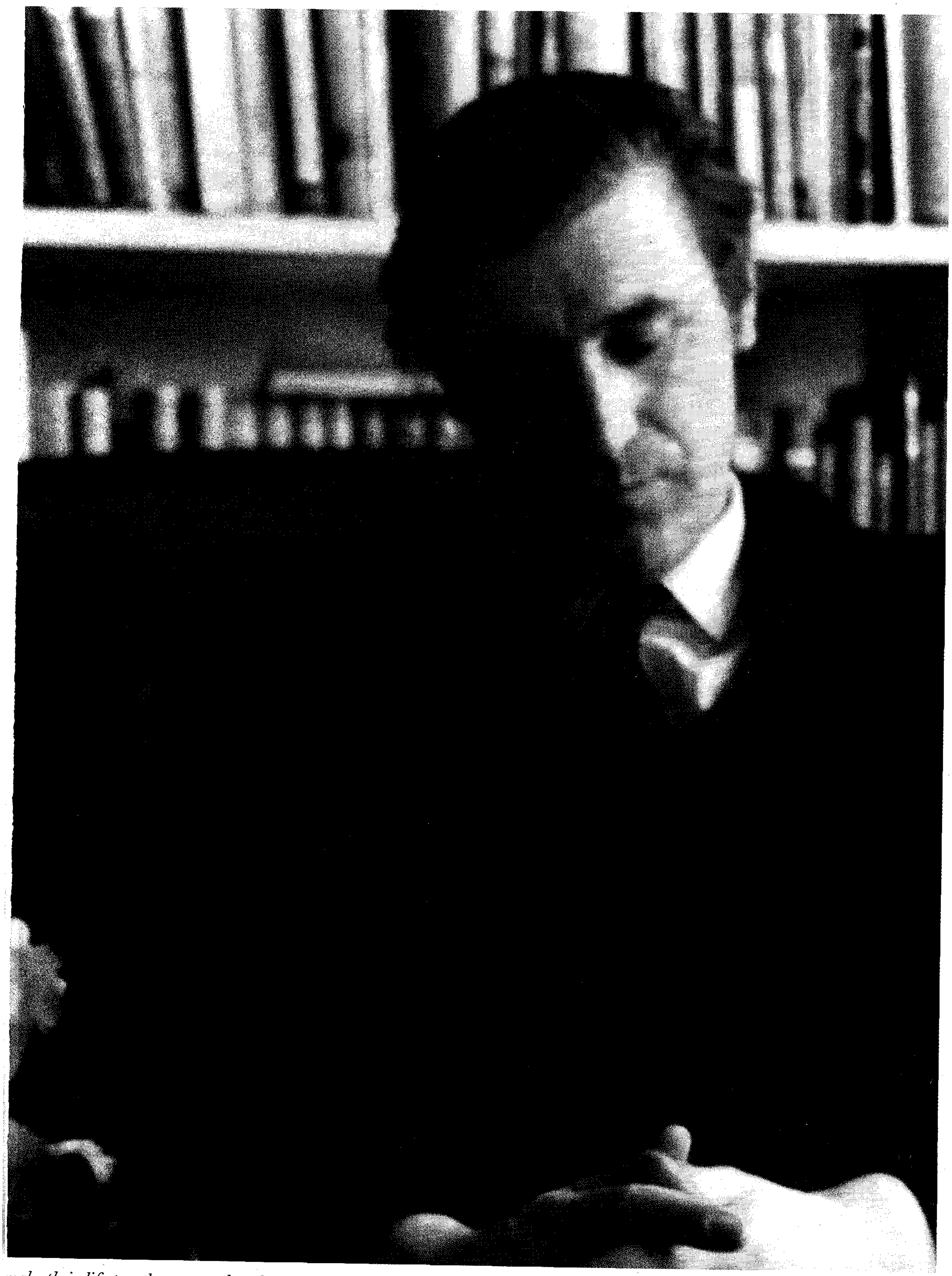
of impossible plenty: "So this is America, I marvelled. / Beautiful, beautiful America!" He seems never quite to have lost his sense of her foreignness, her freedom, her innocent, outsized response to a world he took for granted.

Through your eyes it was foreign.
Plain hedge hawthorns were peculiar
  aliens,
A mystery of peculiar lore and doings.
Anything wild, on legs, in your eyes
Emerged at a point of exclamation
As if it had appeared to dinner guests
In the middle of the table.

Beneath the glitter, she was a girl with a load of troubles on her back: a suicide attempt that had almost succeeded, a nightmare series of electroshock treatments, and, behind all that, an adored Prussian father who scared her stiff and died when she was eight. Hughes calls her father "The Minotaur," and many of the "Birthday Letters" chart Plath's gradual, fatal descent into his lair. As he describes it, it was Hughes who showed her how to get there and, naturally, he did it in the name of poetry, because "We / Only did what poetry told us to do."

Plath was already an accomplished poet when she met Hughes. She had won prizes and published at least as much as he had. Her poems were skillful, polished but frozen, "thin and brittle, the lines cold," he says. In comparison, Hughes had already arrived; he had a hot line open to whatever it was that made him tick. It didn't matter that sometimes he used mumbo-jumbo to get where he wanted to be—astrology, hypnosis, Ouija boards, or the dottier forms of Jungian magical thinking. All that mattered was that the poems he fished out of the depths were shimmering with life, while the life in Plath's work was still locked away out of sight. Finally, provoked by his wife's violence into blind rage, he unwittingly handed her the key she had been looking for: " 'Marvellous!' I shouted. . . . 'That's the stuff you're keeping out of your poems!' " Always the good student, she went down into the cellarage, key in hand. But the ghouls she released were malign. They helped her write the great poems first collected in "Ariel," but they destroyed her marriage, and then they destroyed her. ♦

Together in London, 1961. In his poems Hughes doesn't soften Plath's violent ra



nake their life together seem other than a high-wire act—one slip and they were in the abyss. Photograph by David Bailey.

In seeing the clouds part
the past evening
I remember your face
from 20 years before

FICTION

THE SUN, THE MOON, THE STARS

If she's all that, what can go wrong?

BY JUNOT DÍAZ

not a bad guy. I know how that sounds—defensive, unscrupulous—but it's true. I'm like everybody else: weak, full of mistakes, but basically good. Magdalena disagrees. She considers me a typical Dominican man: a *sucio*, an asshole. See, many months ago, when Magda was still my girl, when I didn't have to be careful about almost everything, I cheated on her with this chick who had tons of eighties freestyle hair. Didn't tell Magda about it, either. You know how it is. A smelly bone like that, better off buried in the back yard of your life. Magda only found out because homegirl wrote her a fucking *letter*. And the letter had *details*. Shit you wouldn't even tell your boys drunk.

The thing is, that particular bit of stupidity had been over for months. Me and Magda were on an upswing. We weren't as distant as we'd been the winter I was cheating. The freeze was over. She was coming over to my place and instead of us hanging with my knucklehead boys—me smoking, her bored out of her skull—we were seeing movies. Driving out to different places to eat. Even caught a play at the Crossroads and I took her picture with some bigwig black playwrights, pictures where she's smiling so much you'd think her wide-ass mouth was going to unhinge. We were a couple again. Visiting each other's family on the weekends. Eating breakfast at diners hours before anybody else was up, rummaging through the New Brunswick library together, the one Carnegie built with his guilt money. A nice rhythm we had going. But then the Letter hits like a "Star Trek" grenade and detonates everything, past, present, future. Suddenly her folks want to kill me. It don't matter that I helped them with their taxes two years running or that I mow their lawn. Her father, who used to treat me like his *hijo*, calls me an asshole on the phone, sounds like he's strangling himself with the cord. "You no deserve I speak to you in Spanish," he says. I see one of Magda's girlfriends at the Woodbridge Mall—Claribel, the *ecuatoriana* with the biology degree and the *chinita* eyes—and she treats me like I ate somebody's kid.

You don't even want to hear how it went down with Magda. Like a five-train collision. She threw Cassandra's letter at me—it missed and landed under a Volvo—and then she sat down on the curb and started hyperventilating. "Oh, God," she wailed. "Oh, my God."

This is when my boys claim they would have pulled a Total Fucking Denial. Cassandra who? I was too sick to my stomach even to try. I sat down next to her, grabbed her flailing arms, and said some dumb shit like "You have to listen to me, Magda. Or you won't understand."

LET me tell you something about Magda. She's a Bergenline original: short with big eyes and big hips and dark curly hair you could lose a hand in. Her father's a baker, her mother sells kids' clothes door to door. She's a forgiving soul. A Catholic. Dragged me into church every Sunday for Spanish Mass, and when one of her relatives is sick, especially the ones in Cuba, she writes letters to some nuns in Pennsylvania, asks the sisters to pray for her family. She's the nerd every librarian in town knows, a teacher whose students fall in love with her. Always cutting shit out for me from the newspapers, Dominican shit. I see her like, what, every week, and she still sends me corny little notes in the mail: "So you won't forget me." You couldn't think of anybody worse to screw than Magda.

I won't bore you with the details. The begging, the crawling over glass, the crying. Let's just say that after two weeks of this, of my driving out to her house, sending her letters, and calling her at all hours of the night, we put it back together. Didn't mean I ever ate with her family again or that her girlfriends were celebrating. Those *cabronas*, they were like, *No, jamás*, never. Even Magda wasn't too hot on the rapprochement at first, but I had the momentum of the past on my side. When she asked me "Why don't you leave me alone?" I told her the truth: "It's because I love you, *mami*." I know this sounds like a load of doo-doo, but it's true: Magda's my heart. I didn't want her to leave me; I wasn't about to start looking for a girlfriend because I'd fucked up one lousy time.

Don't think it was a cakewalk, because it wasn't. Magda's stubborn; back when we first started dating, she said she wouldn't sleep with me until we'd been together at least a month, and homegirl stuck to it, no matter how hard I tried to get into her knickknacks. She's sensitive, too. Takes to hurt the way water takes to paper. You can't imagine how many times she asked (especially after we finished fucking), "Were you ever going to tell me?" This and "Why?" were her favorite questions. My favorite answers were "Yes" and "It was a stupid mistake."

We even had some conversation about Cassandra—usually in the dark, when we couldn't see each other. Magda asked me if I'd loved Cassandra and I told her no, I didn't. "Do you still think about her?" "Nope." "Did you like fucking her?" "To be honest, baby, it was lousy." And for a while after we got back together everything was as fine as it could be.

But what was strange was that instead of shit improving between us, things got worse and worse. My Magda was turning into another Magda. Who didn't want to sleep over as much or scratch my back when I asked her to. Amazing how

FILIP PAGOWSKI

you notice the little things. Like how she never used to ask me to call back when she was on the line with somebody else. I always had priority. Not anymore. So of course I blamed all that shit on her girls, who I knew for a fact were still feeding her a bad line about me.

She wasn't the only one with counsel. My boys were like, "Fuck her, don't sweat that bitch," but every time I tried I couldn't pull it off. I was into Magda for real. I started working overtime on her, but nothing seemed to pan out. Every movie we went to, every night drive we took, every time she did sleep over seemed to confirm something negative about me. I felt like I was dying by degrees, but when I brought it up she told me that I was being paranoid.

About a month later, she started making the sort of changes that would have alarmed a paranoid nigger. Cuts her hair, buys better makeup, rocks new clothes, goes out dancing on Friday nights with her friends. When I ask her if we can chill, I'm no longer sure it's a done deal. A lot of the time she Bartlebys me, says, "No, I'd rather not." I ask her what the hell she thinks this is and she says, "That's what I'm trying to figure out."

I know what she's doing. Making me aware of my precarious position in her life. Like I'm not aware.

THEN it was June. Hot white clouds stranded in the sky, cars being washed down with hoses, music allowed outside. Everybody getting ready for summer, even us. We'd planned a trip to Santo Domingo early in the year, an anniversary present, and had to decide whether we were still going or not. It had been on the horizon awhile, but I figured it was something that would resolve itself. When it didn't, I brought the tickets out and asked her, "How do you feel about it?"

"Like it's too much of a commitment."

"Could be worse. It's a vacation, for Christ's sake."

"I see it as pressure."

"Doesn't have to be pressure."

I don't know why I get stuck on it the way I do. Bringing it up every day, trying to get her to commit. Maybe I was getting tired of the situation we were in. Wanted to flex, wanted something to change. Or maybe I'd gotten this idea in my head that if she said, "Yes, we're going," then shit would be fine between us. If she said, "No, it's not for me," then at least I'd know that it was over.

Her girls, the sorest losers on the planet, advised her to take the trip and then never speak to me again. She, of course, told me this shit, because she couldn't stop herself from telling me everything she's thinking. "How do you feel about that suggestion?" I asked her.

She shrugged. "It's an idea."

Even my boys were like, "Nigger, sounds like you're wasting a whole lot of loot on some bullshit," but I really thought it would be good for us. Deep down, where my boys don't know me, I'm an optimist. I thought, Me and her on the Island. What couldn't this cure?

LET me confess: I love Santo Domingo. I love coming home to the guys in blazers trying to push little cups of Brugal into my hands. Love the plane landing, everybody clapping when the wheels kiss the runway. Love the fact that I'm the only nigger on board without a Cuban link or a flapjack of makeup on my face. Love the redhead woman on her way to meet the daughter she hasn't seen in eleven years. The gifts she holds on her lap, like the bones of a saint. "*M'ija* has *tetas* now," the woman whispers to her neighbor. "Last time I saw her, she could barely speak in sentences. Now she's a woman. *Imagínate*." I love the bags my mother packs, shit for relatives and something for Magda, a gift. "You give this to her no matter what happens."

If this was another kind of story, I'd tell you about the sea. What it looks like after it's been forced into the sky through a blowhole. How when I'm driving in from the airport and see it like this, like shredded silver, I know I'm back for real. I'd tell you how many poor motherfuckers there are. More albinos, more cross-eyed niggers, more *tígueres* than you'll ever see. And the *mujeres—olvídate*. How you can't go five feet without running into one you wouldn't mind kicking it with. I'd tell you about the traffic: the entire history of late-twentieth-century automobiles swarming across every flat stretch of ground, a cosmology of battered cars, battered motorcycles, battered trucks, and battered buses, and an equal number of repair shops, run by any fool with a wrench. I'd tell you about the shanties and our no-running-water faucets and the sambos on the billboards and the fact that my family house comes equipped with an ever-reliable latrine. I'd tell you about my *abuelo* and his *campo* hands, how unhappy he is that I'm not sticking around, and I'd tell you about the street where I was born, Calle XXI, how it hasn't decided yet if it wants to be a slum or not and how it's been in this state of indecision for years.

But that would make it another kind of story, and I'm having enough trouble as it is with this one. You'll have to take my word for it. Santo Domingo is Santo Domingo. Let's pretend we all know what goes on there.

I MUST have been smoking dust, because I thought we were fine those first couple of days. Sure, staying locked up at my *abuelo's* house bored Magda to tears, she even said so—"I'm bored, Yunior"—but I'd warned her about the obligatory Visit with Abuelo. I thought she wouldn't mind; she's normally mad cool with the *viejitos*. But she didn't say much to him. Just fidgeted in the heat and drank fifteen bottles of water. Point is, we were out of the capital and on a *guagua* to the interior before the second day had even begun. The landscapes were superfly—even though there was a drought on and the whole *campo*, even the houses, was covered in that red dust. There I was. Pointing out all the shit that had changed since the year before. The new Pizza Huts and Dunkin' Donuts and the little plastic bags of water the *tigueritos* were selling. Even kicked the historicals. This is where Trujillo and his Marine pals slaughtered the *gavilleros*, here's where the Jefe used to take his girls, here's where Balaguer sold his soul to the Devil. And Magda seemed to be enjoying herself. Nodded her head. Talked back a little. What can I tell you? I thought we were on a positive vibe.

I guess when I look back there were signs. First off, Magda's not quiet. She's a talker, a fucking *boca*, and we used to have this thing where I would lift my hand and say, "Time out," and she would have to be quiet for at least two minutes, just so I could process some of the information she'd been spouting. She'd be embarrassed and chastened, but not so embarrassed and chastened that when I said, "O.K., time's up," she didn't launch right into it again.

Maybe it was my good mood. It was like the first time in weeks that I felt relaxed, that I wasn't acting like something was about to give at any moment. It bothered me that she insisted on reporting to her girls every night—like they were expecting me to kill her or something—but, fuck it, I still thought we were doing better than anytime before.

We were in this crazy budget hotel near the university. I was standing outside staring out at the Septentrionales and the blacked-out city when I heard her crying. I thought it was something serious, found the flashlight, and fanned the light over her heat-swollen face. "Are you O.K., *mami*?"

She shook her head. "I don't want to be here."

"What do you mean?"

"What don't you understand? I. Don't. Want. To. Be. Here."

This was not the Magda I knew. The Magda I knew was super courteous. Knocked on a door before she opened it.

I almost shouted, "What is your fucking problem!" But I didn't. I ended up hugging and babying her and asking her what was wrong. She cried for a long time and then after a silence started talking. By then the lights had flickered back on. Turned out she didn't want to travel around like a hobo. "I thought we'd be on a beach," she said.

"We're going to be on a beach. The day after tomorrow."

"Can't we go now?"

What could I do? She was in her underwear, waiting for me to say something. So what jumped out of my mouth? "Baby, we'll do whatever you want." I called the hotel in La Romana, asked if we could come early, and the next morning I put us on an express *guagua* to the capital and then a second one to La Romana. I didn't say a fucking word to her and she didn't say nothing to me. She seemed tired and watched the world outside like maybe she was expecting it to speak to her.

By the middle of Day 3 of our All-Quisqueya Redemption Tour we were in an air-conditioned bungalow watching HBO. Exactly where I want to be when I'm in Santo Domingo. In a fucking resort. Magda was reading a book by a Trappist, in a better mood, I guess, and I was sitting on the edge of the bed, fingering my useless map.

I was thinking, For this I deserve something nice. Something physical. Me and Magda were pretty damn casual about sex, but since the breakup shit has gotten weird. First of all, it ain't regular like before. I'm lucky to score some once a week. I have to nudge her, start things up, or we won't fuck at all. And she plays like she doesn't want it, and sometimes she doesn't and then I have to cool it, but other times she does want it and I have to touch her pussy, which is my way of initiating things, of saying, "So, how about we kick it, *mami*?" And she'll turn her head, which is her way of saying, "I'm too proud to acquiesce openly to your animal desires, but if you continue to put your finger in me I won't stop you."

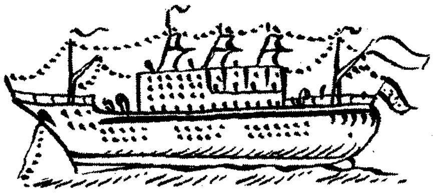
Today we started no problem, but then halfway through she said, "Wait, we shouldn't."

I wanted to know why.

She closed her eyes like she was embarrassed at herself. "Forget about it," she said, moving her hips under me. "Just forget about it."

I DON'T even want to tell you where we're at. We're in Casa de Campo. The Resort That Shame Forgot. The average asshole would love this place. It's the largest, wealthiest resort on the Island, which means it's a goddam fortress, walled away from everybody else. *Guachimanes* and peacocks and ambitious topiaries everywhere. Advertises itself in the States as its own country, and it might as well be. Has its own airport, thirty-six holes of golf, beaches so white they ache to be trampled, and the only Island Dominicans you're guaranteed to see are either caked up or changing your sheets. Let's just say my *abuelo* has never been here, and neither has yours. This is where the Garcías and the Colóns come to relax after a long month of oppressing the masses, where the *tutumpotes* can trade tips with their colleagues from abroad. Chill here too long and you'll be sure to have your ghetto pass revoked, no questions asked.

We wake up bright and early for the buffet, get served by cheerful women in Aunt Jemima costumes. I shit you not: these sisters even have to wear hankies on their heads. Magda is scratching out a couple of cards to her family. I want to talk about the day before, but when I bring it up she puts down her pen. Jams on her shades.



"I feel like you're pressuring me."

"How am I pressuring you?" I ask.

We get into one of those no-fun twenty-minute arguments, which the waiters keep interrupting by bringing over more orange juice and café, the two things this island has plenty of.

"I just want some space to myself every now and then. Every time I'm with you I have this sense that you want something from me."

"Time to yourself," I say. "What does that mean?"

"Like maybe once a day, you do one thing, I do another."

"Like when? Now?"

"It doesn't have to be now." She looks exasperated. "Why don't we just go down to the beach?"

As we walk over to the courtesy golf cart, I say, "I feel like you rejected my whole country, Magda."

"Don't be ridiculous." She drops one hand in my lap. "I just wanted to relax. What's wrong with that?"

The sun is blazing and the blue of the ocean is an overload on the brain. Casa de Campo has got beaches the way the rest of the island has got problems. These, though, have no merengue, no little kids, nobody trying to sell you *chicharrones*, and there's a massive melanin deficit in evidence. Every fifty feet there's at least one Eurofuck beached out on a towel like some scary pale monster that the sea's vomited up. They look like philosophy professors, like budget Foucaults, and too many of them are in the company of a dark-assed Dominican girl. I mean it, these girls can't be no more than sixteen, look *puro ingenio* to me. You can tell by their inability to communicate that these two didn't meet back in their Left Bank days.

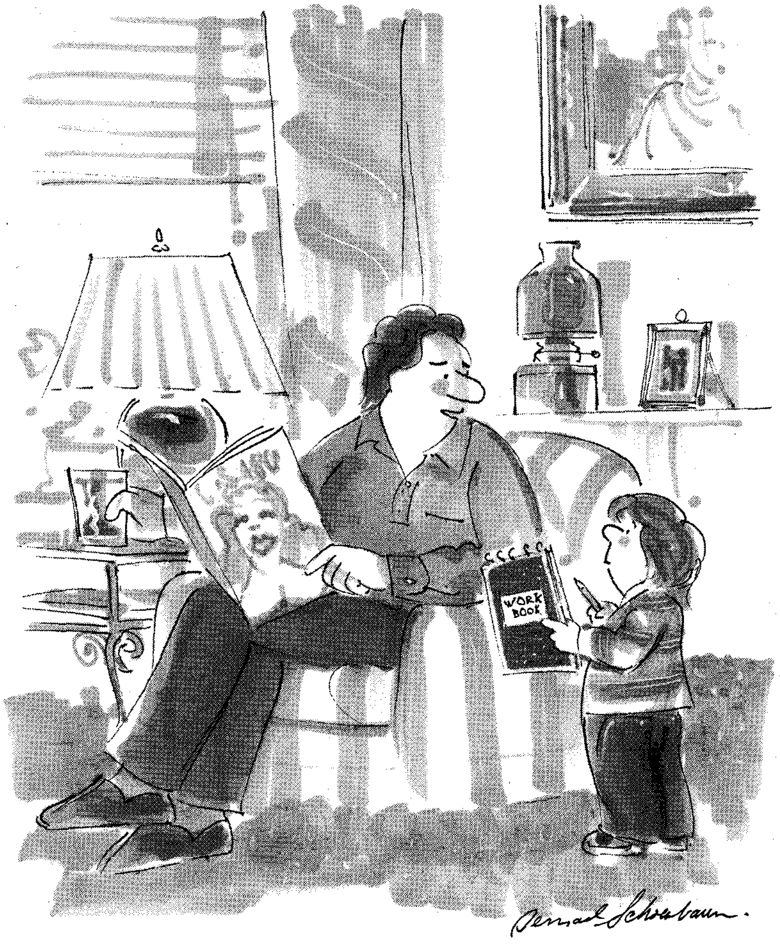
Magda's rocking a dope Ochun-colored bikini that her girls helped her pick out so she could torture me, and I'm in these old ruined trunks that say "Sandy Hook Forever!" I'll admit it, with Magda half naked in public I'm feeling vulnerable and uneasy. I put my hand on her knee. "I just wish you'd say you love me."

"Yunior, please."

"Can you say you like me a lot?"

"Can you leave me alone? You're such a pestilence."

I let the sun stake me out to the sand. It's disheartening, me and Magda together. We don't look like a couple. When she



“Sorry, son. Daddy provides food, clothing, and shelter. The rest is up to you.”

• •

smiles niggers ask her for her hand in marriage; when I smile folks check their wallets. Magda's been a star the whole time we've been here. You know how it is when you're on the Island and your girl's an octoroon. Brothers go apeshit. On buses, the machos were like, “*Tu sí eres bella, muchacha.*” Every time I dip into the water for a swim, some Mediterranean Messenger of Love starts rapping to her. Of course, I'm not polite. “Why don't you beat it, *pancho*? We're on our honeymoon here.” There's this one squid who's mad persistent, even sits down near us so he can impress her with the hair around his nipples, and instead of ignoring him she starts a conversation and it turns out he's Dominican, too, from Quisqueya Heights, an Assistant D.A. who loves his people. “Better I'm their prosecutor,” he says. “At least I understand them.” I'm thinking he sounds like the sort of nigger who in the old days used to lead bwana to the rest of us. After three minutes of him, I can't take it no more, and say, “Magda, stop talking to that asshole.”

The Assistant D.A. startles. “I know you ain't talking to me,” he says.

“Actually,” I say, “I am.”

“This is unbelievable.” Magda gets to her feet and walks stiff-legged toward the water. She's got a half-moon of sand stuck to her butt. A total fucking heartbreak.

Homeboy's saying something else to me, but I'm not listening. I already know what she'll say when she sits back down. “Time for you to do your thing and me to do mine.”

THAT night I loiter around the pool and the local bar, Club Cacique, Magda nowhere to be found. I meet a Dominicana from West New York. Fly, of course. *Trigueña*, with the most outrageous perm this side of Dyckman. Lucy is her name. She's hanging out with three of her teen-age girl cousins. When she removes her robe to dive into the pool, I see a spiderweb of scars across her stomach. Tells me in Spanish, “I have family in La Romana, but I refuse to stay with them. No way. My uncle won't let any of us out of the house after dark. So I'd rather go broke and stay here than be locked in the prison.”

I meet these two rich older dudes drinking cognac at the bar. Introduce themselves as the Vice-President and Bárbaro, his bodyguard. I must have the footprint of fresh disaster on my face. They listen to my troubles like they're a couple of capos and I'm talking murder. They commiserate. It's a thousand degrees out and the mosquitoes hum like they're about to inherit the earth, but both these cats are wearing expensive suits, and Bárbaro is even sporting a purple ascot. Once a soldier tried to saw open his neck and now he covers the scar. “I'm a modest man,” he says.

I go off to phone the room. No Magda. I check with reception. No messages. I return to the bar and smile.

The Vice-President is a young brother, in his late thirties, and pretty cool for a *chupabarrio*. He advises me to find another woman. Make her *bella* and *negra*. I think, Cassandra.

The Vice-President waves his hand and shots of Barceló appear so fast you'd think it's science fiction.

“Jealousy is the best way to jump-start a relationship,” the Vice-President says. “I learned that when I was a student at Syracuse. Dance with another woman, dance merengue with her, and see if your *jeva's* not roused to action.”

“You mean roused to violence.”

“She hit you?”

“When I first told her. She smacked me right across the chops.”

“*Pero, hermano*, why'd you tell her?” Bárbaro wants to know. “Why didn't you just deny it?”

“*Compadre*, she received a letter. It had evidence.”

The Vice-President smiles fantastically and I can see why he's a vice-president. Later, when I get home, I'll tell my mother about this whole mess, and she'll tell me what this brother was the vice-president of.

“They only hit you,” he says, “when they care.”

“Amen,” Bárbaro murmurs. “Amen.”

ALL of Magda's friends say I cheated because I was Dominican, that all us Dominican men are dogs and can't be trusted. But it wasn't genetics; there were reasons. Causalities.

The truth is there ain't no relationship in the world that doesn't hit turbulence. Ours certainly did.

I was living in Brooklyn and she was with her folks in Jersey. We talked every day on the phone and on weekends we saw each other. Usually I went in. We were real Jersey, too: malls, the parents, movies, a lot of TV. After a year of us together, this was where we were at. Our relationship wasn't the sun, the moon, and the stars, but it wasn't bullshit, either. Especially not on Saturday mornings, over at my apartment, when she made us coffee *campo* style, straining it through the sock thing. Told her parents the night before she was staying over at Claribel's; they must have known where she was, but they never said shit. I'd sleep late and she'd read, scratching my back in slow arcs, and when I was ready to get up I would start kissing her until she would say, "God, Yunior, you're making me wet."

I wasn't unhappy and wasn't actively pursuing ass like some niggers. Sure, I checked out other females, even danced with them when I went out, but I wasn't keeping numbers or nothing.

Still, it's not like seeing somebody once a week doesn't cool shit out, because it does. Nothing you'd really notice until some new chick arrives at your job with a big chest and a smart mouth and she's like on you almost immediately, touching your pectorals, moaning about some *moreno* she's dating who's always treating her like shit, saying, "Black guys don't understand Spanish girls."

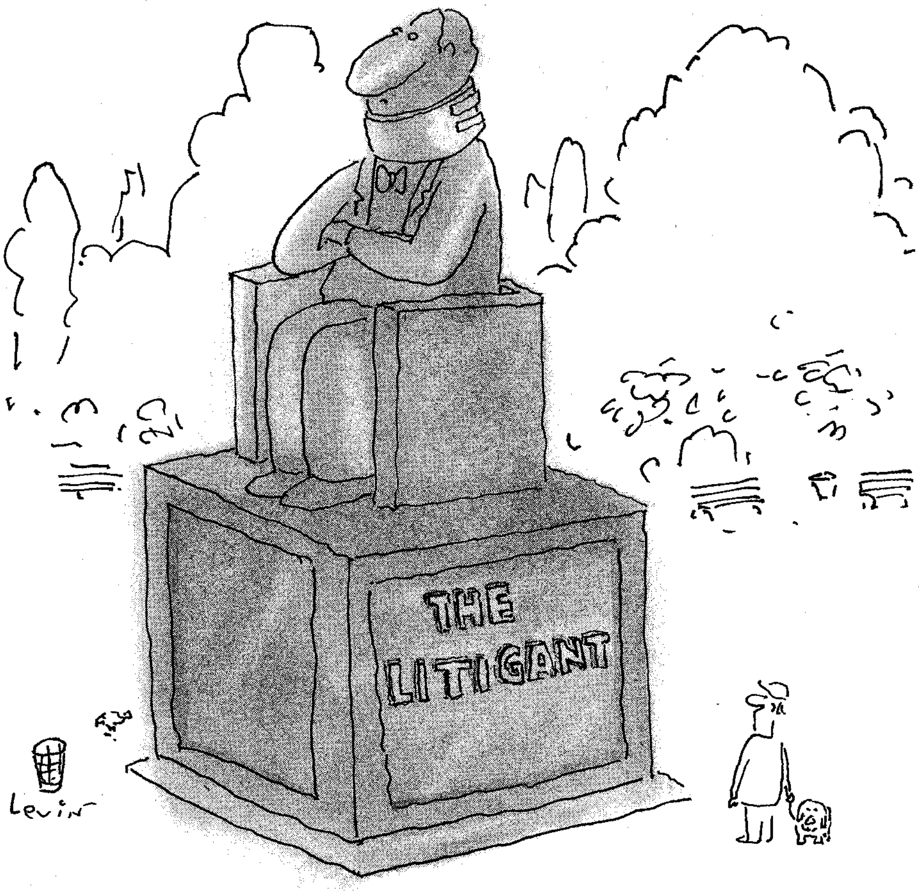
Cassandra. She organized the football pool and did crossword puzzles while she talked on the phone, and had a thing for denim skirts. We got into a habit of going to lunch and having the same conversation. I advised her to drop the *moreno*, she advised me to find a girlfriend who could fuck. First week of knowing her, I made the mistake of telling her that sex with Magda had never been topnotch.

"God, I feel sorry for you," Cassandra laughed. "At least Rupert gives me some Grade A dick."

The first night we did it—and it was good, too, she wasn't false advertising—I felt so lousy that I couldn't sleep, even though she was one of those sisters whose body fits next to you perfect. I was like, She knows, so I called Magda right from the bed and asked her if she was O.K.

"You sound strange," she said.

I remember Cassandra pressing the hot cleft of her pussy against my leg and me saying, "I just miss you."



ANOTHER day, and the only thing Magda has said is "Give me the lotion." Tonight the resort is throwing a party. All guests are invited. Attire's formal, but I don't have the clothes or the energy to dress up. Magda, though, has both. She pulls on these supertight gold lamé pants and a matching halter that shows off her belly ring. Her hair is shiny and as dark as night and I can remember the first time I kissed those curls, asking her, "Where are the stars?" And she said, "They're a little lower, *papi*."

We both end up in front of the mirror. I'm in slacks and a wrinkled guayabera. She's applying her lipstick; I've always believed that the universe invented the color red solely for Latinas.

"We look good," she says.

It's true. My optimism is starting to come back. I'm thinking, This is the night for reconciliation. I put my arms around her, but she drops her bomb without blinking a fucking eye: tonight, she says, she needs space.

My arms drop.

"I knew you'd be pissed," she says.

"You're a real bitch, you know that."

"I didn't want to come here. You made me."

"If you didn't want to come, why didn't you have the fucking guts to say so?"

And on and on and on, until finally I just say, "Fuck this," and head out. I feel unmoored and don't have a clue of what comes next. This is the endgame, and instead of pulling out all the stops, instead of *pongándome más chivo que un chivo*, I'm feeling sorry for myself, *como un parigüayo sin suerte*. I'm thinking, I'm not a bad guy.

Club Cacique is jammed. I'm looking for Lucy. I find the Vice-President and Bárbaro instead. At the quiet end of the bar, they're drinking cognac and arguing about whether there are fifty-six Dominicans in the major leagues or fifty-seven. They clear out a space for me and clap me on the shoulder.

"This place is killing me," I say.

"How dramatic." The Vice-President reaches into his suit for his keys. He's wearing those Italian leather shoes that look like braided slippers. "Are you inclined to ride with us?"

"Sure," I say. "Why the fuck not?"

"I wish to show you the birthplace of our nation."

Before we leave I check out the crowd. Lucy has arrived. She's alone at the edge of the bar in a fly black dress. Smiles excitedly, lifts her arm, and I can see the dark stubbled spot in her armpit. She's got sweat patches over her outfit, and mosquito bites on her beautiful arms. I think, I should stay, but my legs carry me right out of the club.

WE pile in a diplomat's black BMW. I'm in the back seat with Bárbaro; the Vice-President's up front driving. We leave Casa de Campo behind and the frenzy of La Romana, and soon everything starts smelling of processed cane. The roads are dark—I'm talking no fucking lights—and in our beams the bugs swarm like a Biblical plague. We're passing the cognac around. I'm with a vice-president, I figure what the fuck.

He's talking—about his time in upstate New York—but so is Bárbaro. The bodyguard's suit's rumpled and his hand shakes as he smokes his cigarettes. Some fucking bodyguard. He's telling me about his childhood in San Juan, near the border of Haiti. Liborio's country. "I wanted to be an engineer," he tells me. "I wanted to build schools and hospitals for the pueblo." I'm not really listening to him; I'm thinking about Magda, how I'll probably never taste her *chocha* again.

And then we're out of the car, stumbling up a slope, through bushes and *guineo* and bamboo, and the mosquitoes are chewing us up like we're the special of the day. Bárbaro's got a huge flashlight, a darkness obliterator. The Vice-President's cursing, trampling through the underbrush, saying, "It's around here somewhere. This is what I get for being in office so long." It's only then I notice that Bárbaro's holding a huge fucking machine gun and his hand ain't shaking no more. He isn't watching me or the Vice-President—he's listening. I'm not scared, but this is getting a little too freaky for me.

"What kind of gun is that?" I ask, by way of conversation.

"A P-90."

"What the fuck is that?"

"Something old made new."

Great, I'm thinking, a philosopher.

"It's here," the Vice-President says.

I creep over and see that he's standing over a hole in the ground. The earth is red. Bauxite. And the hole is blacker than any of us.

"This is the Cave of the Jagua," the Vice-President announces in a deep, respectful voice. "The birthplace of the Tainos."

I raise my eyebrow. "I thought they were South America."

"We're speaking mythically here."

Bárbaro points the light down the hole, but that doesn't improve anything.

"Would you like to see inside?" the Vice-President asks me.

I must have said yes, because Bárbaro gives me the flashlight and the two of them grab me by my ankles and lower me into the hole. All my coins fly out of my pockets. *Bendiciones.* I don't see much, just some odd colors on the eroded walls, and the Vice-President's calling down, "Isn't it beautiful?"

This is the perfect place for insight, for a person to become somebody better. The Vice-President probably saw his future self hanging in this darkness, bulldozing the poor out of their shanties, and Bárbaro, too—buying a concrete house for his mother, showing her how to work the air-conditioner—but, me, all I can manage is a memory of the first time me and Magda talked. Back at Rutgers. We were waiting for an E bus together on George Street and she was wearing purple. All sorts of purple.

And that's when I know it's over. As soon as you start thinking about the beginning, it's the end.

I cry, and when they pull me up the Vice-President says, indignantly, "God, you don't have to be a pussy about it."

THAT must have been some serious Island voodoo: the ending I saw in the cave came true. The next day we went back to the United States. Five months later I got a letter from my ex-baby. I was dating someone new, but Magda's handwriting still blasted every molecule of air out of my lungs.

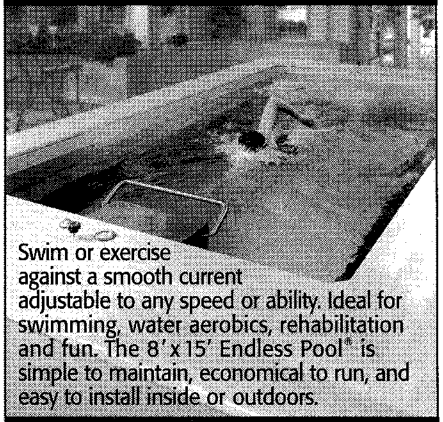
It turned out she was also going out with somebody else. A very nice guy she'd met. Dominican, like me.

But I'm getting ahead of myself. I need to finish by showing you what kind of fool I am.

When I returned to the bungalow that night, Magda was waiting up for me. Was packed, looked like she'd been bawling.

"I'm going home tomorrow," she said.

I sat down next to her. Took her hand. "This can work," I said. "All we have to do is try." ♦

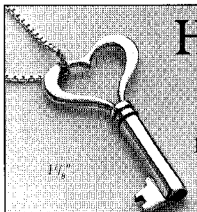


Swim at Home™

Swim or exercise against a smooth current adjustable to any speed or ability. Ideal for swimming, water aerobics, rehabilitation and fun. The 8' x 15' Endless Pool® is simple to maintain, economical to run, and easy to install inside or outdoors.

Call 800-732-8660 For FREE BROCHURE
or visit www.endlesspools.com

ENDLESS POOLS®
200 E Dutton Mill Rd, Dept. N11
Aston, PA 19014



HEART KEY

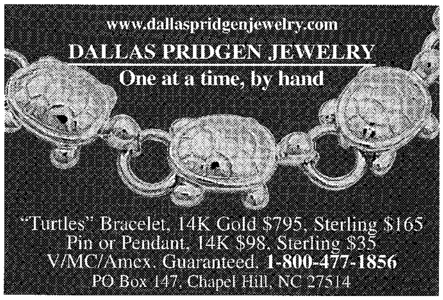
A most romantic token from James Breakell's workshop. Finely detailed pendant on 18" chain. Sterling silver $30. 14k Gold $163. Add $4 handling. Catalog available (800)767-6411.

J.H. Breakell & Co.
132 Spring St., Dept. NYHK, Newport, RI 02840

ANTIQUE-FILLED CHARM

Visit a friendly and elegant antique-filled Inn in a famous New England village. Charming rooms and suites. Skiing and the new Norman Rockwell Museum nearby. Write for brochure or phone for reservations, **413-298-5545.**

THE RED LION INN
Food & Lodging Since 1773
Stockbridge, Massachusetts 01262



www.dallaspridgenjewelry.com
DALLAS PRIDGEN JEWELRY
One at a time, by hand

"Turtles" Bracelet, 14K Gold $795, Sterling $165
Pin or Pendant, 14K $98, Sterling $35
V/MC/Amex. Guaranteed. 1-800-477-1856
PO Box 147, Chapel Hill, NC 27514

Fine English Garden Tools
Send for our FREE color catalog of spades, forks and trowels from Bulldog of England, plus Certified Organic Seeds including Gourmet Greens and our new Supermane Sunflower.

Seeds of Change™
Santa Fe, New Mexico
Toll Free 1-888-762-7333 code 98051
www.seedsofchange.com

Venice Bellagio Verona
Lake Como Lake Maggiore
Bergamo Orta San Giulio

CARAVELLA ITALIA

Escorted tours of Northern Italy in small groups.

Call Toll-Free: **888-665-2112** www.seeitaly.com

Now hear this!

W.E.B. Griffin
The Investigators

- Over 4,500 Best sellers on cassette
- Full-length readings
- Call for introductory offer

(800) 88-BOOKS

BOOKS ON TAPE® #1
World's Largest Selection™

Box 7900-N, Newport Beach, CA 92658
Reg. U.S. Pat. & T.M. Off.

THE "EMILY" TABLE

A 28″ tall elegant, **unique** hand-wrought iron occasional table. Topped with 21″ of black glass, created, signed & dated by sculptor Daniel Barrett.

Art "fits in anywhere"

Barrett Ironworks Ltd.

1-800-597-2744

$445.00
includes shipping and handling

©

TUSCANY UMBRIA
& Coastal Regions in Italy

Exclusive Private Villas & Farmhouses with S.Pools some with T. Courts. Superior knowledge as we only deal with the owners direct.

TUSCANY NOW
Email:info@tuscanynow.com

USA (EUROVILLAS)
Tel/Fax 707 648 2066
TUSCANY NOW (UK, EUROPE)
Tel +44 171 272 5469 Fax +44 171 272 6184

SUNFLOWER COLLECTION
14kt Yellow & Pink Gold

Sunflower **Bracelet** $495 Sunflower **Necklace** $1100
Sunflower **Earring** $125 Sunflower **Pendant** $95
Unconditionally Guaranteed **1-888-764-3100**
Aurora & Co. www.aurora-jewelry.com

French Holiday Rentals

Experience *la vraie France* in your own chateau, cottage or farmhouse. Weekly or monthly rentals. All regions.

Call (510) 559-8080 or write
2124 Kittredge St, Suite 200
Berkeley, CA 94704
VILLE ET VILLAGE

TALKING POINTS

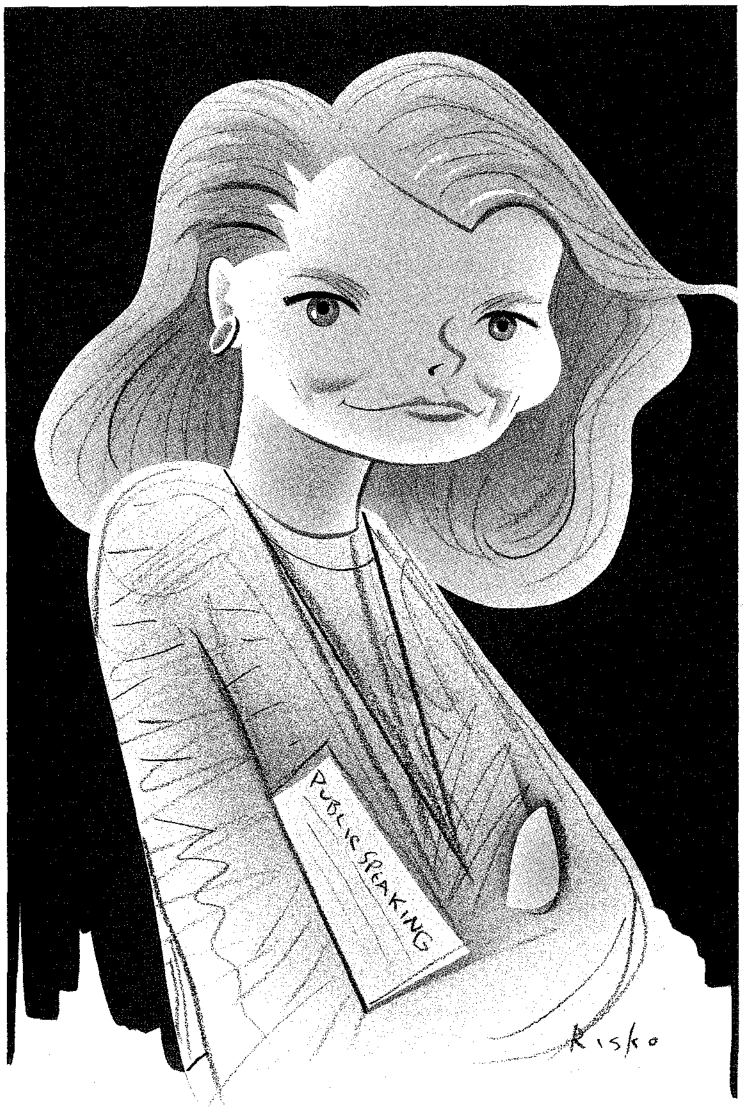
Behind the lines with Peggy Noonan.

BY HENDRIK HERTZBERG

THE end of January is a busy season for superannuated speechwriters. The news industry gears up for the President's State of the Union address, and veteran political wordsmiths, like retired ballplayers at World Series time, are suddenly in demand. All-news cable interviewers and newspaper reporters assigned to sidebar duty want to know: How does "the process" work? Does somebody tell you what to write, or do you just dream it up? Do you kick around ideas with the President ahead of time? Does he do a lot of editing or just take what you've written as is?

When the topic is speechwriting, the first name on every booker's list is Peggy Noonan's. Only if she is unavailable does the call go out to someone else—me, for example. (I was President Carter's speechwriter, a job that my predecessor, James Fallows, once likened to being F.D.R.'s tap-dancing teacher.) Unlike many of the rest of us, Ms. Noonan is not at all superannuated. She is beautiful, blond, and glamorous—which doesn't hurt, but isn't why, or mainly why, she gets the call. She gets it because she is a very good speechwriter, perhaps the most accomplished in the country. During the nineteen-eighties, she was responsible for the lioness's share of whatever memorable rhetoric issued from the mouths of Presidents Reagan and Bush. She didn't do "evil empire"; her colleague Anthony Dolan came up with that. But she did do Mr. Reagan's celebrated remarks at Normandy Beach for the fortieth anniversary of D Day. ("These are the boys of Pointe du Hoc. These are the men who took the cliffs.") She wrote Mr. Reagan's simple, sombre statement of grief after the Challenger disaster. And she wrote Mr. Bush's startlingly effective 1988 acceptance speech. That was the one with "kinder, gentler" and "a thousand points of light" and "read my lips: no new taxes"; the one that wiped out Michael Dukakis's lead in the polls; the one that arguably swept Mr. Bush into the White House (and, via "read my lips" blowback following the 1990 budget agreement, arguably swept him right back out again).

Like sexual excess and substance abuse, speechwriting has been around awhile. What's new is the fact that we talk about it openly, without shame. It was known, in a general sort of way, that Alexander Hamilton helped draft President Washington's farewell address, that William Seward contributed notes that, rewritten and much improved, ended up in Lincoln's First Inaugural, and that people like Samuel Rosenman and Robert E. Sherwood were sometimes seen in the vicinity of the West Wing before one of Franklin Roosevelt's fireside chats. But such services were performed discreetly. And the speechwriters of old had day jobs: Hamilton was the Secretary of the Treasury, Seward the Secretary of State, Rosenman a New York State judge, Sherwood a Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright. Theodore Sorensen and Harry McPherson, who wrote speeches for John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson, respectively, did so as a sideline to their main work, as policy advisers and operatives. By the time the Carter crowd moved in, the White House had established what was brazenly called the Office of Speechwriting and put it in the care of someone styled Chief Speechwriter to the President—a title that would be less jarring in "The Mikado" than in "The Federalist Papers." It's one thing for the leader of a great republic to have retinues of assistants and phalanxes of bodyguards. These attest to the gravity and importance of his official responsibilities. But a Chief Speechwriter? He might as well have a Chief Toothpaste Squeezer, or an Office of Coffee Stirring. Aren't there some things that even a President should at least appear to do for himself?



Like sexual excess, speechwriting has been around awhile. What's new is the fact that we talk about it openly, without shame.

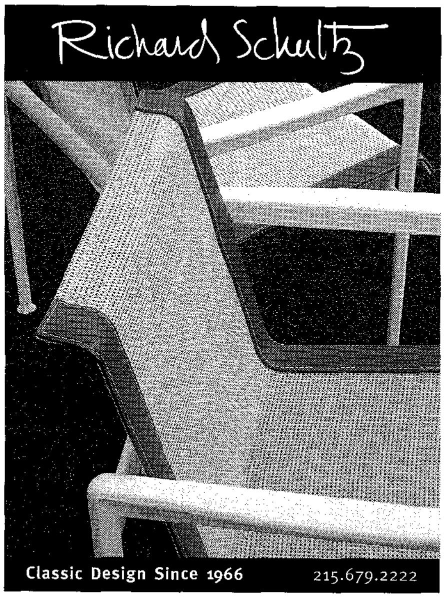
ROBERT RISKO

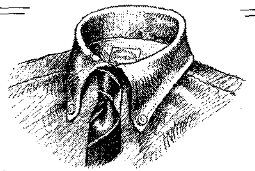
As with sex and drugs, though, the new candor about speechwriting has the merit of demystifying an activity that was once shrouded in darkness. Everyone knows that Presidents—and governors and senators and C.E.O.s—have neither the time nor, in most cases, the inclination to write their own speeches from scratch. Why not be frank about it? In 1990, Ms. Noonan gave us her political memoir, "What I Saw at the Revolution." A how-to book was a logical next step. "Simply Speaking: How to Communicate Your Ideas with Style, Substance, and Clarity" (HarperCollins; $23) is self-help of the aspirational variety. Unlike a cookbook, but like one of those mass paperbacks that tell you how to run a Fortune 500 company, "Simply Speaking" is more apt to guide the typical reader in fantasizing about doing something than in actually doing it. "We are all asked sooner or later to say a few words at the annual meeting, the parent-teacher gathering, the awards dinner, the memorial service, the wedding." Perhaps so. And for these rare occasions Ms. Noonan has some harmless, if obvious, advice: keep it short, use humor, don't be stentorian, have something to say and know what it is, be yourself, rehearse. But giving a public speech, let alone writing one for someone else to give, is something normal people seldom do. Anyhow, Ms. Noonan is a little perfunctory about the how-to stuff. She tries gamely, peppering her text with zippy chapter headings ("BE YOU") and admonitions that may ("Put your points and stories in order") or may not ("Always ask, if you can, for a car service") be useful in helping you prepare for that talk at the PTA. But her heart isn't in it. What she really wants to do is go over some of the speeches she has written and analyze some she has heard or read, and when she does that she becomes engaged.

MS. NOONAN didn't know Reagan terribly well. She writes with uncharacteristic annoyance that after he was wounded in the March, 1981, assassination attempt his aides were told "to limit nonessential demands on the President's time, and they were more than happy to define meetings with speechwriters as nonessential because they viewed the speechwriters as idiots, i.e., serious conservatives." But this didn't much matter, because these particular idiots knew "what he thought, why he thought it, and how he'd say it." She notes—with, I must disclose, a graceful compliment to me—that this was an advantage denied to Carter's speechwriters. (I'd put it differently, though: because Mr. Carter was an undogmatic empiricist, not an ideologue, he had no fixed opinions on matters he knew nothing about.) Ms. Noonan made up for the lack of personal feedback with a mental exercise. "I used to imagine [Reagan] in my mind as an old sailor, a wise ol' salt ambling down a rolling deck as the ship rolled in the sea," she writes. "He never fell or had to grab the rails, he just rolled with the swells as they rose and fell. George Bush, on the other hand, was like a man briskly walking down a city sidewalk, stopping all of a sudden to greet a friend and then plowing on, slowing briefly for a light, going forward with the crowd, turning to say hello to the man at the hot dog stand, moving on."

Poor Bush: pedestrian even in a young woman's fantasy, while Reagan was Popeye. But this only makes Olive Oyl's triumph with the 1988 Bush acceptance speech all the more impressive, and she lingers over it lovingly in an extended explication de texte. She shows how the speech cast Bush's lack of a distinct public identity in the noble light of service to Reagan, while suggesting almost subliminally that he might not have agreed with every last thing the old boy did: "Ronald Reagan asked for, and received, my candor. He never asked for, but did receive, my loyalty." She reminds us of how the speech dealt with Bush's silver-spoon problem:

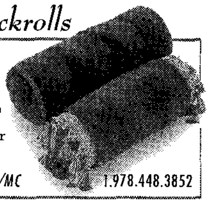
> Yes, my parents were prosperous, and their children were lucky. But there were lessons we had to learn about life. John


Richard Schultz
Classic Design Since 1966 215.679.2222


Baggier and Better-for Less!
Buttondowns the way they used to be- ***generously cut*** *for exceptional comfort and traditional good looks, then meticulously hand constructed and single needle stitched throughout by experienced shirtmakers.* ***Impeccable even after 100+*** *launderings, our uniquely woven, 100% yarn-dyed pima cotton oxford buttondown with its authentic 3 5/16" collar and distinctive full roll, six button front, long sleeves and tail, is* ***guaranteed*** *to outlast all others.*
$39.95- first time buyers (Reg $50)
White or Blue- $5 shpg- ***(401) 635-4272***
©Mercer&Sons Box 63- A37 Adamsville RI 02801

Explore Exotic Turkey
Treasures of Türkiye
Tour Information 800.572.0526
Intimate groups 12 person max.
www.treasuresofturkey.com

Facing Prostate Cancer?
Explore all the options.
For FREE information call
Theragenics Cancer Information Center,
1-800-458-4372


Sheared Mink Neckrolls
Give a gift as fetching and seductive as your Valentine.
Transfurmation™
Creations from Recycled Fur
www.transfurmation.com
4"x12" • $160 - $200 + S&H • Visa /MC 1.978.448.3852

Discover Tuscany
with courses of Italian or Art History at
The British Institute of Florence
Piazza Strozzi 2
50123 Firenze, Italy
Tel: 011 39 55 284031
Fax: /287071

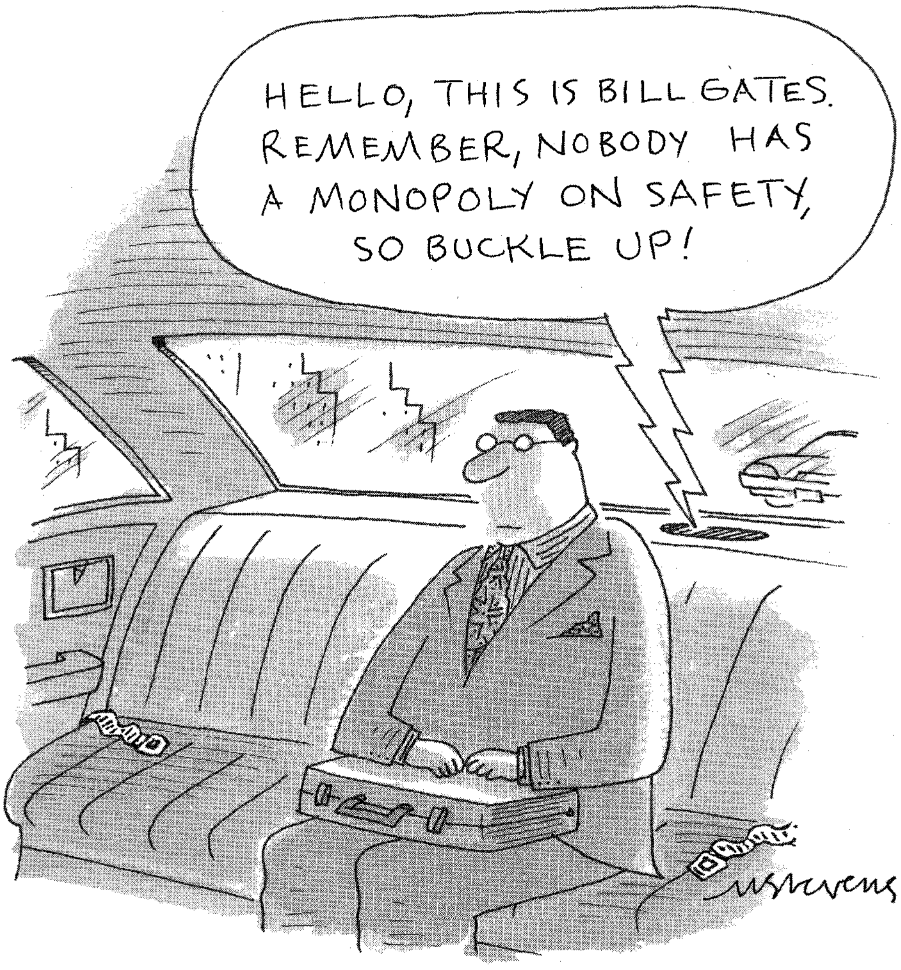
Kennedy discovered poverty when he campaigned in West Virginia; there were children there who had no milk. And young Teddy Roosevelt met the new America when he roamed the immigrant streets of New York.

In other words, Ms. Noonan paraphrases, "I know the press is playing me as a rich preppy, but look what the rich preppies Jack and Teddy became—great men." And the Bush equivalent of rural hollers and urban streets?

> I learned a few things about life in a place called Texas. . . . Lived the dream—high school football on Friday nights, little league, neighborhood barbecue.

I was up in the cheap seats while these words were being delivered, trading sarcastic wisecracks with some fellow-members of the liberal media. But even our biased little anti-claque couldn't help noticing that this stuff was going over big. The speech (as Ms. Noonan does not mention) ended with the candidate leading the throng in the Pledge of Allegiance, thus highlighting an "issue" that Dukakis would absent-mindedly allow to distort the campaign. I didn't see Ms. Noonan in the hall that night, but I imagine she must have looked the way Tim Russert had looked during Mario Cuomo's keynote address at the Democratic Convention four years earlier: Russert, who was then a close Cuomo aide, stood mouthing the words his boss was speaking, his broad mug suffused with an expression of total ecstasy.

For the person in the analogous position four years earlier still—me—the experience was not so blissful. As the nominal author of President Carter's 1980 acceptance speech (in reality there were many authors, and my main role was to do the suturing, like an emergency-room trauma surgeon after a gas-main explosion), I had an excellent seat—right up on the platform of Madison Square Garden. Mr. Carter had barely begun speaking, though, when, taking advantage of a pause after one of our carefully crafted applause lines, he urgently signalled that something was wrong with the teleprompter. I rushed belowdecks to alert the technicians to the problem. When I got back, Mr. Carter was in the middle


HELLO, THIS IS BILL GATES. REMEMBER, NOBODY HAS A MONOPOLY ON SAFETY, SO BUCKLE UP!
M. Stevens

of the "We're the party of" litany, and I guess he was feeling expansive, because when he got to the part where the text said "Hubert H. Humphrey" he improvised: "the party of a great man who should have been President, who would have been one of the greatest Presidents in history—Hubert Horatio Hornblower! Er, Humphrey." Horatio was, in fact, Senator Humphrey's middle name. Horatio Hornblower was the hero of C. S. Forester's popular series of seafaring adventure yarns. The conflation that rocketed out of the President's mouth at this inopportune moment, I later learned, had been the 1976 Carter campaign staff's derisive nickname for their most feared rival. Ever since that night in the Garden, I have had to endure a taunt that I suppose must be familiar to William ("I am not a crook") Safire and, for all I know, to Peggy ("We begin bombing in five minutes") Noonan as well: "Was that yours?"

Charles Peters, the editor-in-chief of the *Washington Monthly*, once wrote that this speech of Carter's was what put Reagan in the White House. I've always thought that this was giving it (and me) too much credit. The speech wasn't all *that* terrible. While Carter was delivering it, his pollster, Patrick Caddell, had a roomful of citizens somewhere watching television and wired up to some sort of gadget that allowed them to register approval or disapproval by turning a dial. Caddell assured me later that the needles stayed over to the right almost throughout. And we did get a bump in the polls after the Convention.

But then Presidential candidates always get a bump in the polls after their Conventions. That speech was not one of our team's better efforts. On my wall is a framed copy of a speech that *was* one of our better efforts—the farewell address that Carter delivered just before leaving office. The inscription reads, "Rick—not bad for a 10th draft. Maybe we should have been more careful on earlier speeches, & saved this one 4 more years. Jimmy Carter." Right again, Mr. President.

Too many cooks—that was the trouble with Carter's 1980 Convention speech. Peggy Noonan would understand. In her exegesis of her Conven-

ADVERTISEMENT

R.S.V.P.
reader service value program

AN INVITATION TO RESPOND DIRECTLY TO THE NEW YORKER'S ADVERTISERS

apparel & accessories

DALLAS PRIDGEN JEWELRY. We specialize in fine quality 14k gold and sterling silver jewelry. For a color catalog, call 1-919-933-5759 or visit http://www.dallaspridgenjewelry.com.

HONORA. Designers and Manufacturers of fine 18 karat gold and platinum jewelry featuring diamonds, precious stones, cultured pearls and black Tahitian south sea cultured pearls. For more information, call 1-888-2-HONORA.

ST. ANDREWS WOOLEN MILL. Scotland's finest cashmeres, woolens, tartans, golf shirts and souvenirs. Brochure free, air mail shipping. Major credit cards. Please call 011-44-1334-472366 or visit http://www.standrewswoolenmill.com

automotive

AUDI A4 AVANT. Think serious sports sedan. With a fanny pack. The Audi A4 Avant. For information, visit us at http://www.audiusa.com

MERCURY. For a free brochure featuring the latest innovative vehicles from Mercury, please call 1-800-446-8888 or visit our Web site at http://www.mercuryvehicle.com

financial services

THE MONTGOMERY FUNDS. Free information on a variety of no-load mutual fund investments from The Montgomery Funds. For information, call 1-800-572-FUND or visit our Web site at http://www.montgomeryfunds.com

on-line services

E-NEWS. Look for *The New Yorker* at The Electronic Newsstand on the World Wide Web and browse what's new from our advertisers. http://www.enews.com/magazines/new_yorker

travel

airlines

LOT - THE AIRLINE OF POLAND. Fly LOT to Krakow, one of Europe's most captivating medieval cities or to Warsaw, Poland's vibrant capital. Please call 1-800-223-0593 or visit http://www.lot.com

cruises

RADISSON SEVEN SEAS CRUISES offers worldwide cruising on five unique luxury ships, all rated at the highest levels and offering exceptional quality, service and value. Call 1-800-424-3964 for more information and a free brochure.

hotels & accommodations

SCOTTSDALE PRINCESS. The soul of Arizona. The heart of your vacation. Award-winning cuisine, spacious accommodations, and much more. For information, call 1-800-223-1818.

SOUTHAMPTON PRINCESS. Bermuda's most luxurious resort introduces Dolphin Quest, a very special dolphin-human encounter program for the delight and education of guests. For information, call 1-800-223-1818.

tourism boards

EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION. Authoritative 68-page, full-color guide to 26 countries. Covers important attractions, events, entertainment, transportation, food and drink. With maps and photos. Free. Call 1-800-862-6747.

ISRAEL MINISTRY OF TOURISM. This extraordinary destination has it all. History, culture, great food, shopping, beaches, and more. No one belongs here more than you. Call toll-free 1-888-77-ISRAEL.

LOUISIANA. In Louisiana, we do things a little differently. Come see for yourself. For your free tour guide, please call 1-800-753-9828.

tours

ALPINE TRAILS, LTD. Hike and cross-country ski the Swiss and Italian Alps with popular author/mountaineer Fred Jacobson. Small groups of active outdoor enthusiasts who also appreciate high level creature comforts. 26th year! Call 1-800-291-8126 for a free brochure.

RAIL EUROPE. Choose Eurostar, the Channel Tunnel Train, linking London to Paris or Brussels, or our popular 5-country railpass Europass. Add a car for maximum flexibility. Call 1-800-4EURAIL.

UNITED STATES TOUR OPERATORS ASSOCIATION (USTOA). The smart traveler's planning kit...invaluable information about USTOA members, its $1 million consumer protection plan, and how to select a tour or vacation package. For your free copy, please call 1-800-GO-USTOA.

vacation packages

PLATINUM CLASS VACATIONS™ from Mastercard specializes in air-inclusive vacations at 20–40% off brochure prices. Speak to a vacation consultant today or call 1-800-836-GUEST.

ANSWERS TO 8 X 10 CRYPTIC NO. 30

ACROSS

1	BALI (hidden)
4	ADDS (*adze* hom.)
8	F(ANT)AIL
9	RANDOM (anag.)
10	BAD + IN + AGE
12	cASHEw
14	DROP (hidden)
16	L(OVE N)EST (*let's* anag.)
17	E + VINCE
18	STRA + FED (*arts* rev.)
19	TOSS (anag.)
20	ESPY (2 defs.)

DOWN

1	B + ARBED (*Debra* rev.)
2	L + AND + R + OVER + S
3	IN + DIA (*aid* rev.)
5	DAM + A + SCENE + S
6	DING(H)Y
7	SLOE (*slow* hom.)
11	GROTTO (anag.)
13	hEATER + Y
15	KNIFE (*E* + *fink* rev.)
16	LAST (2 defs.)

IF UNABLE TO REACH TELEPHONE LISTINGS, SEND REQUESTS, WITH ISSUE DATE NOTED, TO THE NEW YORKER READER SERVICES, 20 WEST 43RD ST., NEW YORK, NY 10036.

980202

© 1998 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

tion speech, she contemplates what might have been its best line, if only the suits hadn't tampered with it:

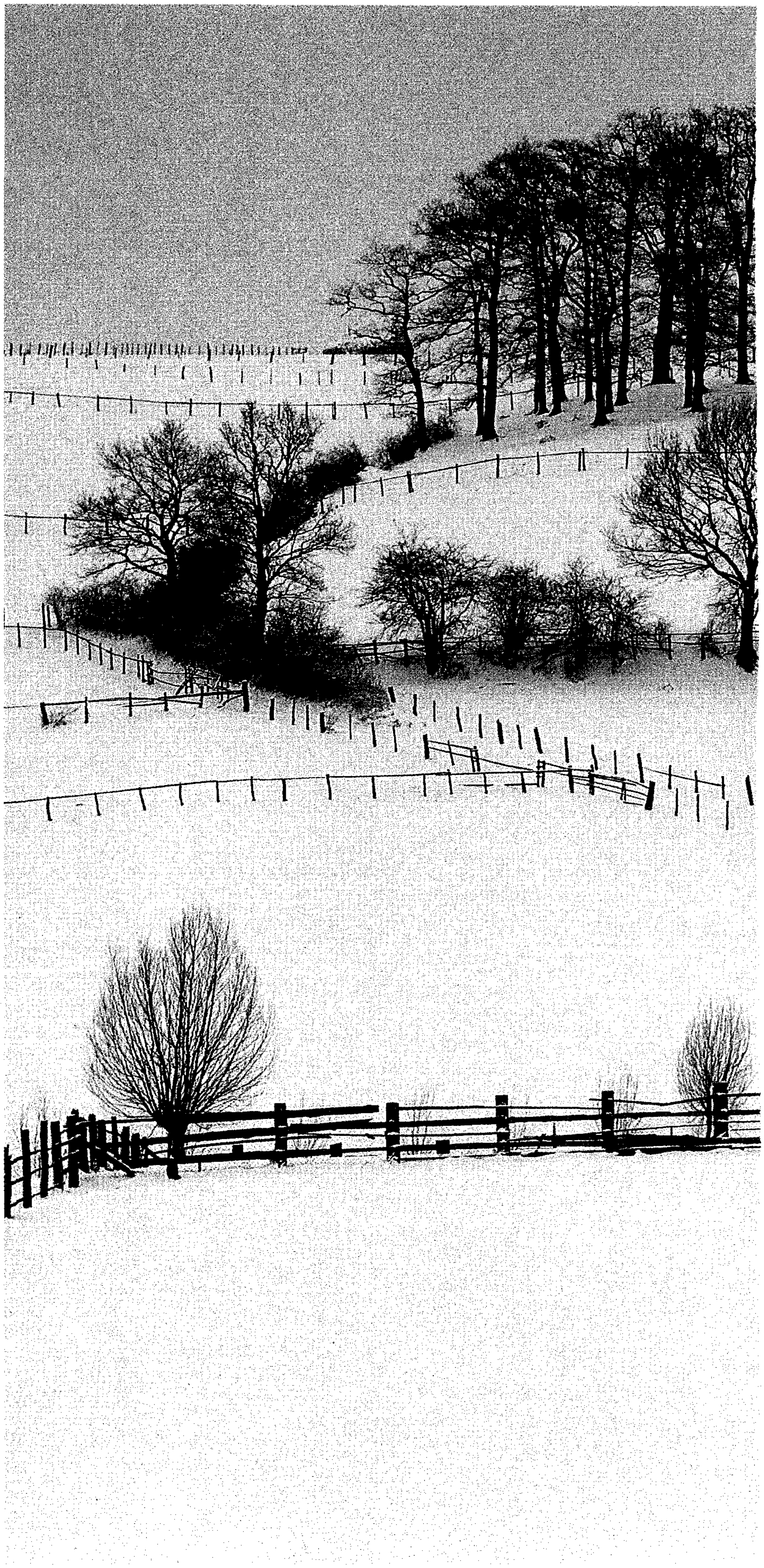
> This is America: the Knights of Columbus, the Grange, Hadassah, the Disabled American Veterans, the Order of Ahepa, the Business and Professional Women of America, the union hall, the Bible study group, LULAC, Holy Name—a brilliant diversity spread like stars, like a thousand points of light in a broad and peaceful sky.

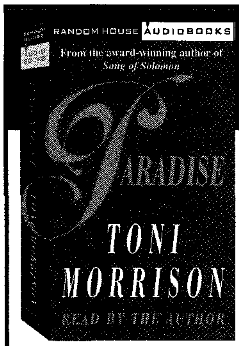
"People around Bush," Ms. Noonan complains mildly, "eager as people around candidates always are to include every single group in every single litany, kept shoehorning in groups that were, well, interest groups: the Disabled American Veterans and so on."

She's right, of course. The line would have been better without LULAC (whatever that is) and the rest. But perhaps it wouldn't have been as true to who Bush actually was. Ours (it is frequently lamented) is an age of inauthenticity. The fact that the speeches of politicians are ghostwritten by committees is often adduced as proof. The existence of celebrity speechwriters like Peggy Noonan presumably clinches the case. But perhaps the ghosted committee product is the authentic voice of the modern Presidency. Ms. Noonan's complaint simply shows that the speech, in the end, was Bush's, not hers. Ms. Noonan may have been the author, but Mr. Bush was the auteur. ♦

SNOW LINES

Albert Renger-Patzsch (1897-1966), one of the more elegantly restrained photographic practitioners of the Neue Sachlichkeit, felt that his approach to the medium should "proceed from the essence of the object." Throughout his career, he made intensified studies of botanical specimens and industrial objects, and of the slag heaps and coke plants of the choked Ruhr Valley. (A selection of his work, "Albert Renger-Patzsch: Photographer of Objectivity," will be published this month by M.I.T.) Upon resettling in the Rhine town of Wamel, in 1944, Renger-Patzsch took this picture of nearby fields dotted with oaks. His sensibility had become looser and more appreciative, but the image still bears the clinical observer's imprimatur: This is Winter.





REQUIRED LISTENING

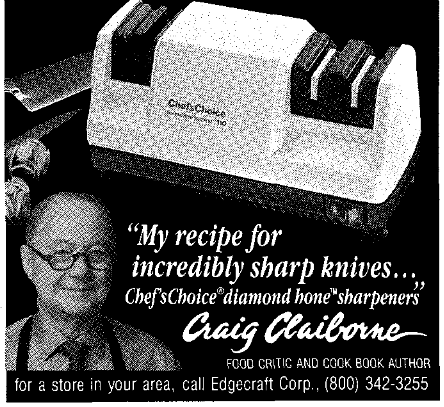
Listen to Toni Morrison read her new book, *PARADISE.*

4 Cassettes, 6 ½ Hours

On audiocassette from

RANDOM HOUSE AUDIOBOOKS

At bookstores, or call 1-800-726-0600 for catalog or to order.



ChefsChoice®

"My recipe for incredibly sharp knives…

Chef'sChoice® diamond hone® sharpeners"

Craig Claiborne

FOOD CRITIC AND COOK BOOK AUTHOR

for a store in your area, call Edgecraft Corp., (800) 342-3255

The Runcible Spoon Bracelet

Purrfect for your Valentine.
Sterling silver w/brass arch.
$130 w/14k gold arch $240.
(2-5/8" wide) RS005
Catalog available.
(401) 846-4357
180 Bellevue Ave.,
Newport, RI 02480
www.RUNCIBLE SPOON.com

GALÁPAGOS

You, eleven other adventurers and our licensed naturalist will explore more islands by yacht than any other Galápagos expedition. 60 trip dates. Machu Picchu and Peru options. Free video and brochure.

INCA *(Inca Floats, Inc.)*
1311-Y 63rd Street, Emeryville, CA 94608
510-420-1550 incafloats@aol.com

No Traffic

No Roads

No Trails

CMH
Heli-Hiking
&
Mountaineering
Banff, AB, Canada
1-800-661-0252
www.cmhhike.com

CAMBRIDGE COLLEGE PROGRAMME

College credit courses for teens
at prestigious Queens' College,
Cambridge, England
Teens 14-19 July 19 - Aug. 8; Adults Aug. 2-8
Brochures U.S. Office:
1-800-922-3552; Fax: 312-988-7268

Est. 1986

MEMOIRS

Planet of the Blind, by Stephen Kuusisto (Dial; $22.95). The author, born with scarred vision and darting eyes as a result of "retinopathy of prematurity," spends the first half of his life desperately trying to pass as a sighted person, burying his first pair of glasses at the age of three. Despite the pain caused by reading ("Words dissolve or run like ants"), he makes it through graduate school, hiding his "blind self, that blackened dolmen," in the recklessness of youth—headlong bicycle-riding, anorexia, drinking, and taking drugs. Finally, at the age of thirty-nine, he gets a guide dog, thereby freeing himself from the "dread of the ordinary." Cramming in all the color and imagery that he can't see, Kuusisto's freewheeling narrative is a vivid tour de force that is as daring and uneven as his efforts to appear sighted.

Echoes of a Native Land, by Serge Schmemann (Knopf; $27.50). In 1980, the author, a son of Alexander Schmemann, the leader of the Russian Orthodox Church in America, went to the Soviet Union with a double mission: to report on Russian life (eventually for the *Times*), and to search for the estate once held by his mother's family on the banks of the Oka River. He is thwarted at every turn, like a figure in a dream, and it takes him a decade to fulfill his quest (the manor has burned, but the lindens are in bloom). Schmemann's researches are herculean, and his story is stark, moving, and infinitely suggestive.

My Sister Life, by Maria Flook ($25; Pantheon). In 1965, the author's fourteen-year-old sister, Karen, unable to bear her mother's narcissism and suffocating sexuality, hooks up with a man she meets in a bowling alley and lights out for a trailer park in Virginia Beach, where she prostitutes herself to G.I.s on their way to Vietnam. Back in Delaware, the twelve-year-old Maria embarks on pettier delinquencies until her sister's sudden and unrepentant return, three years later. All this their parents accept with little more than an exasperated sigh, sending the sisters in turn to the same mental hospital. Flook, a poet, nails down the past with a detachment rarely found in a memoir so turbulent.

Paradise Fever, by Ptolemy Tompkins (Avon; $23). This is a coming-of-New Age story, hilariously recalled by the son of Peter Tompkins, author of "The Secret Life of Plants" and seeker of lost Atlantis. Amid the endless parade of calculator eaters, Yeti hunters, and nude beekeepers inflicted on the household by his blowhard father, the younger Tompkins consoles himself with silent skepticism and horror films, eventually retreating into alcohol and drugs (his condition is eerily diagnosed by one clairvoyant house guest as a dented "crown chakra"). The only way out is another search for Atlantis, which is what this book is—a rescue attempt on the author's submerged, and possibly mythical, innocence.

Small Ships, Big Adventure

- Our exclusive small cruise ships take you to exotic places no other ship can reach.
- See Panama, Belize, Orinoco, the Caribbean & more, all in a friendly, informal atmosphere.

American Canadian Caribbean Line
800-556-7450 www.accl-smallships.com

ORIGINAL LITHOGRAPH

Not a reproduction!
Drawn on stone by

ART SPIEGELMAN

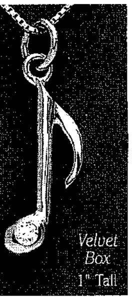
Signed, numbered print,
hand pulled in a strictly
limited edition of 75.

Beau and Eros, 18"x22"

ORDER IN TIME FOR VALENTINE'S DAY!

Special *New Yorker* readers' price: $800. Includes shipping.

CORRIDOR PRESS. 284 Washburn Road, Otego, NY. 13825
Inquiries and VISA/MC orders: 1(607) 432-6359



LOVE NOTE

14k Gold and Diamond Pendant	$385
.10 carat fine VS, G color genuine Diamond. 20" chain included.	
Sterling Silver with CZ	$ 49

Matching earrings available
Satisfaction Guaranteed
1-800-235-0471
Visa, MC, AMEX—S/H $5.75

ROGER NICHOLS
fine studios jewelry
17 NW Irving Avenue • Bend, OR 97701

Velvet Box
1" Tall

The Light-Up Starry Night Pillow

Van Gogh's masterpiece comes to life with this full color cotton pillow. Just press the moon and the stars light up!! $26.00 each.
Free color catalog
of many other silly & sophisticated gifts.
1-800-255-8371
The Unemployed Philosopher's Guild

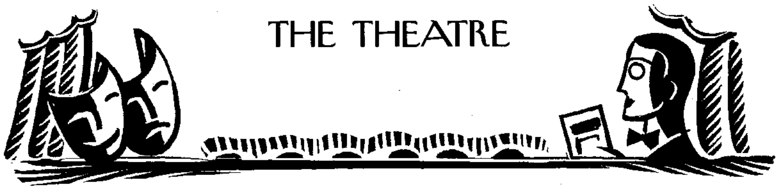
French Country Vacation Rentals

- Dordogne, Provence & more
- Cottages, farmhouses & villas
- Expert, personalized service

AT HOME IN *France*
541-488-9467
www.athomeinfrance.com

WOMANSHIP

Learn to Sail Cruises
for and by women
Virgin Islands • Chesapeake Bay • Florida
New England • Pacific Northwest
Flotillas to Greece and New Zealand
"Womanship . . . the unique philosophy that confidence and team work are as important as the skills learned."
800/342-9295

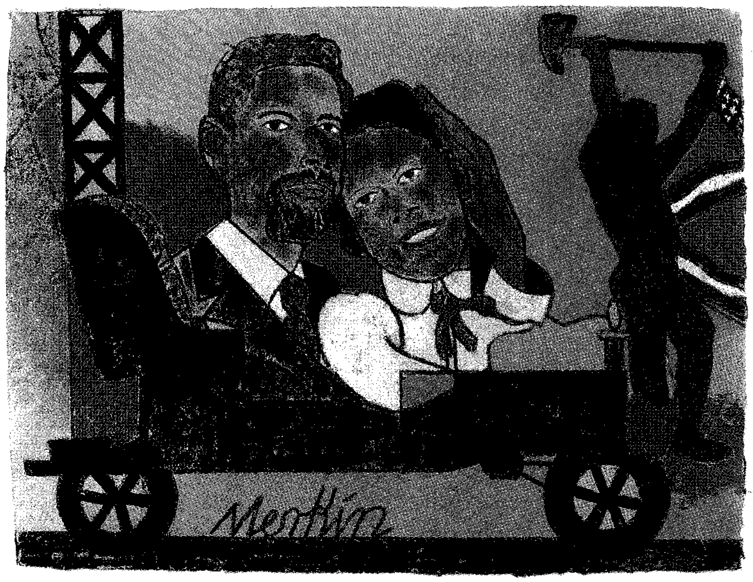


MAKING HISTORY

“Ragtime” comes to Broadway.

BY JOHN LAHR

AT the beginning of a magnificent evening, the Little Boy opens “Ragtime” (at the Ford Center) by looking into a stereopticon, which brings America at the turn of the century into focus; three hours later, he cranks a newfangled movie projector as the musical and the era wind down. Silhouettes play upstage across a fuchsia scrim in a dance of time, and characters emerge momentarily into the light to finish their personal histories, then fall back into the parade of shadows. The flickering ghosts make a thrilling dumb show of the nation at once energized and entrapped by the century’s new momentum. This brilliantly conceived and choreographed moment—a kind of historical frieze—captures, in long shot, “Ragtime” ’s epic sweep. “What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?” Keats wrote, contemplating the stopped time of another frieze. Here, the “mad pursuit” is American liberty, and “Ragtime” dramatizes the sensational collision of its two countervailing historical manifestations: the society’s compulsion for progress and for distraction.


Coalhouse Walker and Sarah, on the wheels of a dream that will soon explode.

RICHARD MERKIN

America’s dream was something both to escape *to* and to escape *from*. “Ragtime” is the chronicle of three New York families (Wasp, Jewish, and black), caught in the vortex of the new century’s agitation and exhaustion, and escape is the longing behind many of its songs: “Let’s run away to Atlantic City,” “We are gliding/gliding far beyond,” “Our son will ride/on the wheels of a dream.” Harry Houdini (Jim Corti), the great escape artist who was also a great immigrant success story, haunts the musical just as he did a vicious competitive society—an awe-inspiring metaphor of triumph over bad odds.

“Ragtime” may be the first musical ever to have its central theme built into the architecture of the theatre that was created to house it: the Ford Center recreates an ambience of magical comfort in a hard world, and signals, in its sumptuous exaggeration, the era’s sense of expectation and of alienation. The sound of ragtime music is likewise an ironic assertion of both promise and pain. “In Har-

DUKE
Safe, serious weight loss through lifestyle change. Personalized care from Duke physicians and health professionals.
Diet and Fitness Center
Duke University Medical Center
Durham, North Carolina 27701
HTTP://dmi–www.mc.duke.edu/dfc/home.html
800-362-8446

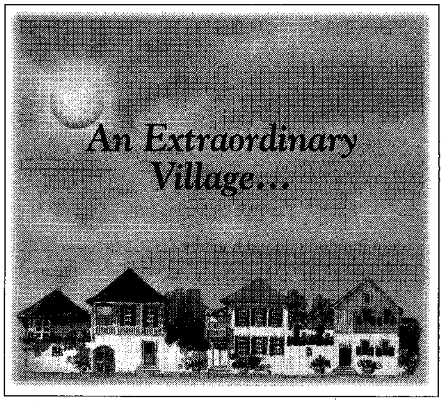
ON THE BEACH IN MALIBU
MALIBU BEACH INN
A special hideaway minutes from L.A., Beverly Hills & airports. Forty-seven lovely ocean front rooms & suites. Private Balconies, Fireplaces, VCR & Continental Breakfast. Malibu's most spectacular view.... We're saving a sunset for you!
MALIBU BEACH INN
a small hotel on the beach
1-800-4-MALIBU
www.malibubeachinn.com

Canoe Canada’s Arctic
Fly-in canoe trips into the heart of North America's last great wilderness - the tundra and taiga of Canada's Northwest Territories. Photograph caribou, wolves, muskox, moose, grizzlies, rich birdlife. Virgin fishing. 7 - 19 days. Wildlife biologist guide. Operating since 1974.
Brochure: **CANOE ARCTIC INC.** Box 130AK, Fort Smith, N.W.T., X0E 0P0 Canada (867)872-2308

European Beret $10
100% Wool • One Size Fits All
Black, Navy, Brown, Red, Camel, Grey
Check or Credit Card w/Exp. Date.
Add $2 Shipping Per Order
John Helmer • Est. 1921 • (503) 223-4976
969 S.W. Broadway, Dept.N028 • Portland, OR 97205

From Your Jungle to Theirs.
Unique Travel Adventures for Ages 50 and Up
IMMERSIA *Travel*
800-207-5454

You don’t needlepoint, do you?
don’t care for bunnies with berries stuck to their heads. Think its boring? Relax in the passage of time while simply creating a treasure that will last a lifetime.
1-888-670-1265 to order $72.50/+post.
online shop www.needlepointing.com *The Earth Kit*


An Extraordinary Village...

lem, men and women of color forgot their troubles and danced and revelled to the music of Coalhouse Walker, Jr.," the pianist Walker (the expert Brian Stokes Mitchell) explains in his first speech. But he is also introducing his raffish self and his new sound, "the music/Of something beginning, /An era exploding, /A century spinning."

Although Terrence McNally has streamlined E. L. Doctorow's teeming novel with real finesse, "Ragtime" is not just a spoken narrative; it tells its story through an eloquent filigree of visual historical detail. Eugene Lee's splendid set, which frames the action within the grand concourse of the original Pennsylvania Station, captures the imperialism of America's explosive new power with movable steel columns and brooding, monumental volumes of space. The stage pictures, souped up by Wendall K. Harrington's superb slide projections (Orchard Street, Union Square, Harlem under the El), bring the vivid weight of old New York's desperation and dynamism to the show's subtle dissection of the past. Here, the motor car, the wheel, the assembly line, the vaudeville house, the moving picture, the railroad track, the picture postcard, the ballpark—all totems of the society's desire to advance and to retreat—are put shrewdly into play by the show's masterly director, Frank Galati.

The centrifugal force of industrial expansion created a hubbub not only in society but in the individual. Ragtime was also the sound of self-realization—the promise of movement in a stalled life. The trajectories of "Ragtime" 's multiple stories demonstrate the pull of the new momentum as it draws the characters away from their traditional ties to country, community, and family, and toward the horizons of their private dreams. Although "Ragtime" celebrates the imposing façades of the Gilded Age, its characters increasingly retreat into themselves, in what becomes a kind of collective journey to the interior. Coalhouse Walker is transformed from pianist to justice-seeking terrorist; his beloved Sarah (the outstanding Audra McDonald), who is beaten to death by the police, from lost soul to martyr; Evelyn Nesbit (the piquant Lynnette Perry) from courtesan to celebrity; Mother (the impressive Marin Mazzie) from dutiful wife to independent woman; Mother's Younger Brother (the compelling Steven Sutcliffe) from rudderless son to revolutionary; Tateh (the charming Peter Friedman) from dreamy immigrant artist to the silent-film director Baron Ashkenazy. Their frenzied solitude—the first flush of modern individualism—is the bonus that "Ragtime" somehow manages to insinuate into its exciting musical storytelling. But this new social mobility also spawned dramatic class divides, which are made spectacular in the prologue by the choreographer, Graciela Daniele. "There were gazebos, and/There were no Negroes," sings the white suburban gentry about the leafy entropy of New Rochelle, where "Ragtime" 's tale begins. In Daniele's gorgeous dance, the underclasses, who are escaping their past, face off against the suburban bourgeoisie, who are hiding from the future. They maneuver around each other—wary phalanxes of special interest who see but never penetrate each other's circle. Their isolation is stunning.

"Ragtime" is a historical pageant designed along the magisterial theatrical lines of Noël Coward's "Cavalcade" and Jerome Kern's "Show Boat." Like them, it is a kind of theatrical watershed: an awesome pyrotechnical display of theatrical craft and showmanship. But unlike them the show's time line doesn't really allow for the same range of musical diversity. ("Show Boat," for instance, covered six decades of popular song.) Within its limited scope, Stephen Flaherty's score achieves admirable variety: the lilting sweetness of "Sarah Brown Eyes," the vaudeville pizzazz of "The Crime of the Century," the bighearted, showstopping elegies "Till We Reach That Day," "Make Them Hear You," "Back to Before." If the score never quite crosses that imaginary line into the exceptional, it also never falls below a fairly high standard. The project has also elicited from the lyricist Lynn Ahrens her best work so far: her high-spirited, clever lyrics delineate both character and idea in unassuming short strokes. Nowhere is this more delightfully displayed than in the patter song "Buffalo Nickel Photoplay, Inc.," where Tateh's sense of wonder comes through the potted history he gives Mother about how his company got its name and he got his fame:

> I go from
> Silhouettes to photos.
> I invent a small projector,
> And soon, I'm making movies
> And they're calling me director!
> An industry is dawning
> And I'm standing on the brink
> Mister Buffalo Nickel Photoplay Inc.!

"RAGTIME" is a big, brave, passionate gamble, not just with cash but with content, and it brings the American musical back to its roots as populist commercial entertainment. The audience is thrust into a richly imagined past not to indulge nostalgia but to reassess the present. Call me old-fashioned, but as an imaginative enterprise this seems of far greater import than whether a lion cub can live happily with a pack of hyenas. Over the last thirty years, with a few exceptions, the major American musicals have been about a Russian shtetl, Weimar Germany, Victorian England, French pointillism. The reason is simple: during Vietnam, the American musical lost confidence in its subject, its form, its audience, and its country. The genre, which is celebratory by nature and commercial by necessity, cannot easily blend joy and irony. But this is what "Ragtime" dares to do.

At the finale, Tateh and Mother get together and merge families. Tateh's daughter joins the Little Boy (Alex Strange) and the orphaned toddler Little Coalhouse, whom Mother takes charge of after Coalhouse runs amok and gets killed. "One afternoon, watching his children play," Tateh says, shifting to the omniscient third person in the musical's envoi, "Tateh had an idea for a movie. A bunch of children, white, black, Christian, Jew, rich, poor—all kinds—a society of ragamuffins, like all of us, a gang, a crazy gang getting into trouble, getting out of trouble, but together despite their differences." The audience laughs as another million-dollar idea dawns in Tateh's entrepreneurial noggin. The new, integrated family moves upstage toward the azure horizon with their arms around one another; the murdered Sarah and the demented Coalhouse materialize and walk calmly downstage to face us. The living and the dead—the winners and losers in the American sweepstakes—sing the same song of hope. In this terrific final stage picture, America's blessing and its barbarity coexist. It is on this democratic vision of cohesion—both social and spiritual—that great societies and great Broadway hits are built. ♦

Slow down!

Luxe biking and walking trips for the culturally curious. Europe and around the World.
1-800-678-1147

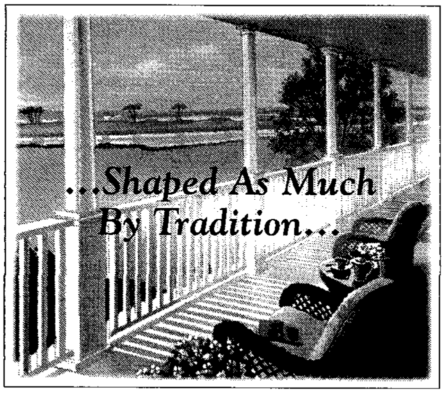
Butterfield & Robinson
BIKING & WALKING SINCE 1966
www.butterfield.com

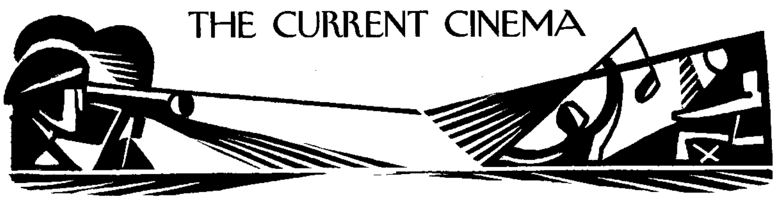
MEN'S WIDE SHOES
EEE-EEEEEE, SIZES 5-13
• FREE catalog
• High quality
• 160 styles
HITCHCOCK SHOES, INC.
Dept. 69B Hingham, MA 02043
1-800-992-WIDE www.wideshoes.com

1¼"
...and the Dish Ran Away With the Spoon
Pin in sterling silver $40. 14k gold $340. Add $4 handling. Catalog available (800) 767-6411.
J.H. Breakell & Co.
132 Spring St., Dept. NYDS, Newport, RI 02840

America's Best River Trip
6-day Wilderness Vacations rafting Idaho's Middle Fork of the Salmon. $1,495 per person.
Outdoor Adventures • P.O. Box 1149, Pt. Reyes, CA 94956 1-800-323-4234.
www.GoRafting.com

Washable Sheepskin Slippers & Boots
Write or Call:
Aussie Connection
135 NE Third Avenue
Hillsboro, OR 97124
1-800-950-2668
for a FREE Catalog


...Shaped As Much By Tradition...



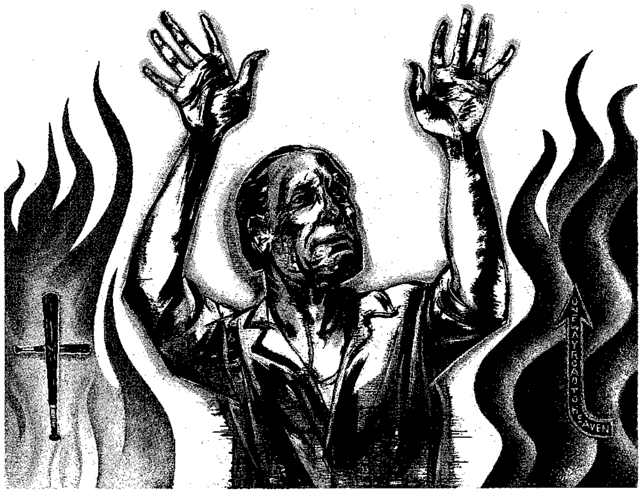
SECRET DREAMS

"The Gingerbread Man" and "The Apostle."

BY DAPHNE MERKIN

WHAT is it that we expect from movies these days? Escape? Enlightenment? Technical razzmatazz? Perhaps we don't truly know: film is a relatively new art form, after all, and as such has not provoked the questions of "relevance" that older, epic modes of expression—such as the novel or the symphony—have aroused. For most of us, the mechanics of filmmaking remain a mystery; we're still prepared to be overwhelmed by what's up on the screen. So it's all the more curious that the business of moviegoing has become infected with what we know in advance about a new film, thanks to media stories about its costs, projected grosses, backstage squabbles, and so on. Robert Altman's "The Gingerbread Man," for instance, arrives after a well-publicized fight between the director and his producers, who wanted him to recut the film in order to make it less Altmanesque and more "commercial." The fact that the director's cut reportedly prevailed doesn't quite erase our sense that the finished film is somehow tainted. Still, the rewards of watching any Altman film are more subtle than might be dreamed of by a marketing whiz; they have to do with the incidental pleasure, say, of "The Gingerbread Man"'s opening sequence, in which the camera pulls back from a lushly catered party scene to linger upon a pretty, oddly anxious waitress serving hors d'oeuvres.

There is something about this young woman—or, more likely, something about the way she is observed out of the corner of the director's eye—that fixes our attention. A minute or two later, she pockets a crystal ashtray. We would have been less intrigued by this act of petty theft had Altman's roving camera not spotted her earlier; we feel a kind of delight in realizing that we are being imperceptibly led even as we think we are following our own hunches. Altman is particularly good at getting us to notice details without pointing them out, and it is in part this talent that gives all his movies—the good, the bad, and the merely baggy—such atmospheric density. Even when he's working with a paper-thin script, based on an original story by John Grisham, an Altman movie has the feel of being about more than itself.


Robert Duvall in "The Apostle": He chides God, "I'm mad at you."

"The Gingerbread Man" is the sort of noirish thriller that depends a lot on inclement weather (in this case, a hurricane called Geraldo) as well as on recognizable plot devices from other noirish thrillers—here "Double Indemnity" by way of "Body Heat." Set in Savannah, it features Kenneth Branagh as Rick Magruder, a savvy, divorced attorney who picks up the wrong woman one rainy night—i.e., the kleptomaniacal waitress

JOE MORSE

(waiflike Embeth Davidtz, who seems to become skinnier as the movie progresses). He is so taken by her apparent vulnerability—she portrays herself as the victim of a deranged-cultist father (Robert Duvall)—that he sets about destroying his own life in order to protect hers. Harried by his embittered ex-wife (Famke Janssen), who threatens to keep their two children from him, Magruder steps into an intricate trap that begins with a hanged cat and ends with kidnapping and murder.

Although "The Gingerbread Man" is essentially transparent, as such stories tend to be, I got so lost in the sheer ambience of it—the tattoo of a butterfly on the waitress's belly, the staccato sound of typing in a police station against the red glare of a car's brake light—that I never decoded the plot until close to the end. Since my radar is usually pretty sharp in these matters, I must have been blinded by Altman's ability to immerse us in his vision. His celebrated skill at allowing actors all the room in the world without letting them wander off into an improvisational wilderness gives "The Gingerbread Man" a loopy, uncontrived flow that is rare for thrillers. Branagh, using a seamless Georgia accent, makes a far more appealing hothead than I suspect he was in the script. Robert Downey, Jr., fills out the small role of an alcoholic private investigator with his usual kinetic intensity. (I fell in love, by the way, with Mae Whitman, who plays Magruder's charmingly supercilious little girl; she would make the perfect Eloise, should anyone be looking.)

Given the current attention to opening-week grosses, and the pitiless speed with which movies are pronounced dead on arrival, I'm not sure that "The Gingerbread Man" will stick around long; it's not linear or steamy enough for true noir buffs, and it may be too homogenized for Altman fans. Still, anyone interested in submitting to the sly charms of a cinematic master, even when he's up to nothing but hokum, should not let "The Gingerbread Man" get away.

"THE APOSTLE," which was produced, written, and directed by its star, Robert Duvall, is fascinating, not least because it addresses without condescension or glibness a subject—religious conviction—that Hollywood generally caricatures. The movie has a documentary feel, and it opens with a quick, effective flashback of the title character as a shy little boy who gets his first taste of devotional fervor when he's brought to a black church by his mammy. We next see him, years later, as a charismatic Pentecostal preacher who might be the Reverend Jim Jones before he ran amok: dressed in jewelled cufflinks and white three-piece suits, he refers to his Aryan-featured children as "my beauties," drives a Lincoln Continental with his name, Sonny, on the license plate, and has so antagonized his wife (Farrah Fawcett) with his philandering that she's taken up with a younger minister and wrested control of his church. After bashing his rival with a baseball bat, Sonny leaves Texas and shows up in the black town of Bayou Boutte, Louisiana, with a new sense of mission. Calling himself the Apostle, he rebuilds "the prettiest little church outside of Heaven" and infuses his new congregation with spiritual ardor before his past catches up with him.

This is one of those labors of love—Duvall spent years trying to get the project off the ground—which often turn out to be more worthy than worthwhile. But, for the most part, "The Apostle" transcends earnestness; it is likely to disarm even the most urbane agnostic. Our culture—particularly our film culture—favors a style of inquiry that is implicitly ironic, leaving us untouched. Duvall's movie penetrates an unfamiliar world in such a persuasive manner that it jolts us out of our usual assumptions. Would our lives, we can't help asking, feel less atomized and cold if we could wag our finger at God the way Sonny does? ("I am mad at you," he chides Him. "I am mad at you.") Duvall's performance is so passionate, so energized, that it's almost eerie: Is Sonny acting him or is he acting Sonny? A vein throbbing in his forehead, his eyes lit by a sense of chagrin at his own power, he plays the man of God as a born flirt, a seducer of the lost and needy. The supporting players, which include John Beasley, June Carter Cash, Miranda Richardson, and Billy Bob Thornton, bend toward Duvall like trees in a strong wind, and the movie leaves a hush like the quiet after a storm. Days later, "The Apostle" had stayed with me—it started a conversation in my head. That's one special effect you can't engineer, because it's buried in the secret life of movies, far from the madding pulse takers. ♦

Are You Tempted?
Our 80-page, colour, fully-illustrated catalogue is the key to a forbidden world of passionate works by artists of both fame and promise. Compact and sexually explicit.
Be warned: it's not for prudes... House & Garden
THE *Erotic* Print Society
http://www.eps.org.uk
Send $9.50 check (to 'EPS') or Visa-Mastercard-Amex details to: EPS (dept NY7), PO Box 10645, London SW10 9ZT, UK. Tel +44-(0)171-351 6955 Fax +44-(0)171-244 8999

LUXURY WALKING TOURS IN ITALY, FRANCE & SWITZERLAND
Tre Laghi
Luxury Walking Tour Specialists
Call: (800) 293-1117
1500 SW Fifth, Suite 2506
Portland, Oregon 97201

Dancing Hearts
Beautifully handcrafted heart pendant. All 18kt. $225. Sterling silver $60. Shown actual size.
© CJC 1997
Chateau Jewelry Corp.
1-888-HEART32
"Made With Love To Give With Love"

Italy & Paris Rentals
Fine homes in city or village, country or seaside. By the week, month or year.
Homebase Abroad, Ltd.
(781) 545-5112
www.homebase-abroad.com
HOMEBASE ABROAD

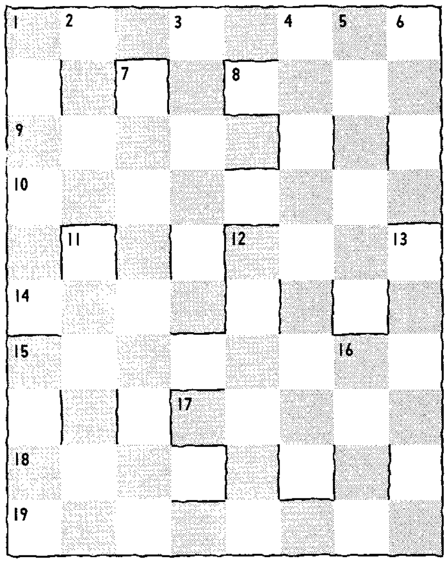
CELEBRATION BOWL
Weddings - Anniversaries
Send someone you love a personalized crystal masterpiece. Hand blown and etched.
Special Inscriptions? Yes.
Rush Orders? Absolutely.
8.5" - $129 12" - $239
408-427-3512
LOVE HONOR PEACE TRUST JOHN & PEGGY

BRITAIN IRELAND FRANCE
with only 11 persons per mini-coach tour
Over 250 set departure leisurely paced tours for the more discerning traveler with Britain's premier small group operator. Call our USA office for a brochure.
Back-Roads Touring Co: 1 - 888 - 868 - 7717

SWANS ISLAND BLANKETS™
Handwoven on Swans Island from wool raised in Maine
FREE CATALOGUE
ATLANTIC BLANKET COMPANY
Swans Island, Maine 04685
Toll-Free 1•888•526•9526

8x10 CRYPTIC

NO. 31 BY MONIKA ZOOK



ACROSS

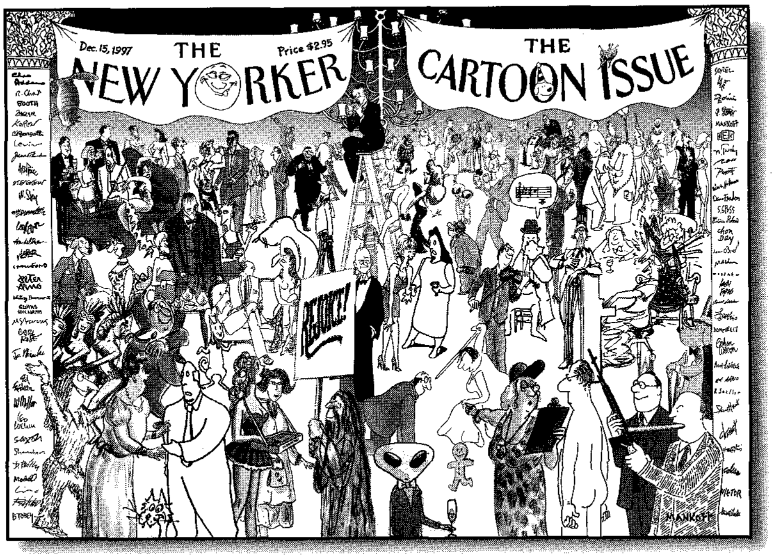
1 For sport, the founder of *The New Yorker* wears ornamental braid (8)
8 Compassion of mine and a bit of yours (4)
9 Island drink at middle of day (5)
10 Jumped out of the water bed, having come to (8)
12 Annoy everyone after beginning to gargle (4)
14 A female tennis great (4)
15 Pair of animals—that is, large and small dogs (8)
17 Not ready for loony tunes (5)
18 Rowing team made barnyard noises (4)
19 Musical instrument crushed by red oak (8)

DOWN

1 Prosecutor pursues innocent Greek character (6)
2 A container not entirely shut (4)
3 Model T tore around a turn (6)
4 Head of state takes a toke east of Sri Lanka (9)
5 Hard peg taken in underhanded (6)
6 Said I'd looked (4)
7 Author drunkenly lay around vent (4,5)
11 Try for the wrath of a serpent? (6)
12 Run around circle with Yank in Mexico (6)
13 Salted nuts didn't get stale (6)
15 Belt is something worn in Oxford? (4)
16 Beheaded certain king (4)

• •

The solution to puzzle No. 30 appears on page 75. For a free copy of "The New Yorker's Guide to Solving Cryptic Crosswords," please send your fax number or a stamped, self-addressed envelope to "Solvers' Guide," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. For an electronic version, send an E-mail to puzzleguide@newyorker.com.

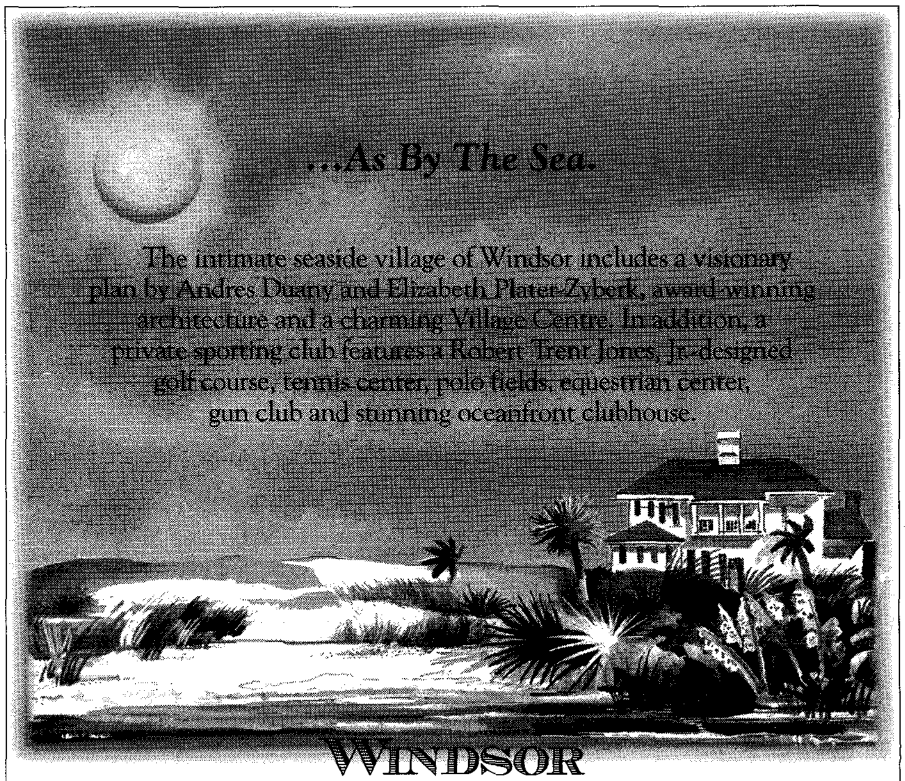


DECK THE WALLS WITH BITS OF FOLLY

Celebrate The New Yorker's *first annual, all-cartoon issue with this collectible poster.*
*Only $19.95!**

Call toll-free 1.888.777.6182.
Poster is 22" high by 28" wide.

*Please add $5.00 per poster for shipping and handling. Residents of CA, CO, GA, IA, IL, KY, MA, MI, NJ, NY and OH, please add applicable sales tax. Offer only available in US. Please allow four to six weeks for delivery.
©1997 The New Yorker Magazine, Inc. All rights reserved.


...As By The Sea.

The intimate seaside village of Windsor includes a visionary plan by Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, award-winning architecture and a charming Village Centre. In addition, a private sporting club features a Robert Trent Jones, Jr.-designed golf course, tennis center, polo fields, equestrian center, gun club and stunning oceanfront clubhouse.

WINDSOR
A Village By The Sea

Houses from $575,000 to over $3 million. Homesites from $150,000 to $1.5 million.

3125 Windsor Boulevard • Vero Beach, Florida 32963
(561) 388-5050 • (800) 233-7656
Prices and terms subject to change. Void where prohibited.

EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

SHOUTS & MURMURS

IN-FLIGHT SURVEY

BY CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

THANK you for flying Fair Air! In order that we might make your next trip an even better experience, please take a few moments to document your journey with us by filling out this questionnaire.

I arrived at the airport by
(a) car
(b) bus
(c) limousine
(d) gondola
(e) foot
(f) sedan chair.

The purpose of my travel is
(a) business
(b) pleasure
(c) terrorism.

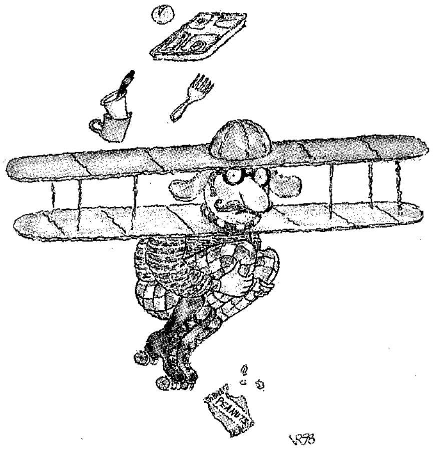
While booking my flight, three months ago, I asked for a specific seat assignment. The reservations agent
(a) said, "What, are you kidding me?"
(b) laughed hysterically
(c) explained politely that God had instructed her not to assign me a seat until after the one I wanted had been given to someone else.

When the check-in agent told me that there was no record of my reservation in the system, I responded by
(a) shrugging philosophically
(b) becoming verbally abusive
(c) threatening legal action
(d) pulling a gun.

I would be less likely to fly Fair Air if I were aware that
(a) two-thirds of the pilots have a drinking problem
(b) the fuel is watered.

When I boarded the aircraft and passed by the cockpit, I observed the flight crew
(a) doing the preflight check
(b) sacrificing small animals
(c) snorting white powder.

The baggage handlers loading the aircraft appeared to me to be
(a) working conscientiously
(b) drunkenly playing rugby.



THIS QUESTION FOR COACH-CLASS PASSENGERS ONLY:
What part of the person sitting in front of you are your knees touching?
(a) spine
(b) kidneys
(c) earlobes.

If allowed, how much carry-on luggage would you bring aboard?
(a) one item
(b) two items
(c) twelve metric tons.

The meal I was served reminded me of
(a) Le Cirque 2000
(b) one of the chickens killed by the Hong Kong government.

When Fair Air asks for volunteers to give up their seats on overbooked flights, do you really believe that we give them money and free round-trip tickets once we get them off the plane?
(a) yes
(b) sort of.

How many times had you previously seen the in-flight movie?
(a) six
(b) seven.

In the event that the engines burst into flames, which would you prefer to hear the pilot say?
(a) "I'm turning off the seat-belt sign so that you can get down on your knees and pray."
(b) "Looks like we'll be landing ahead of schedule, folks!"

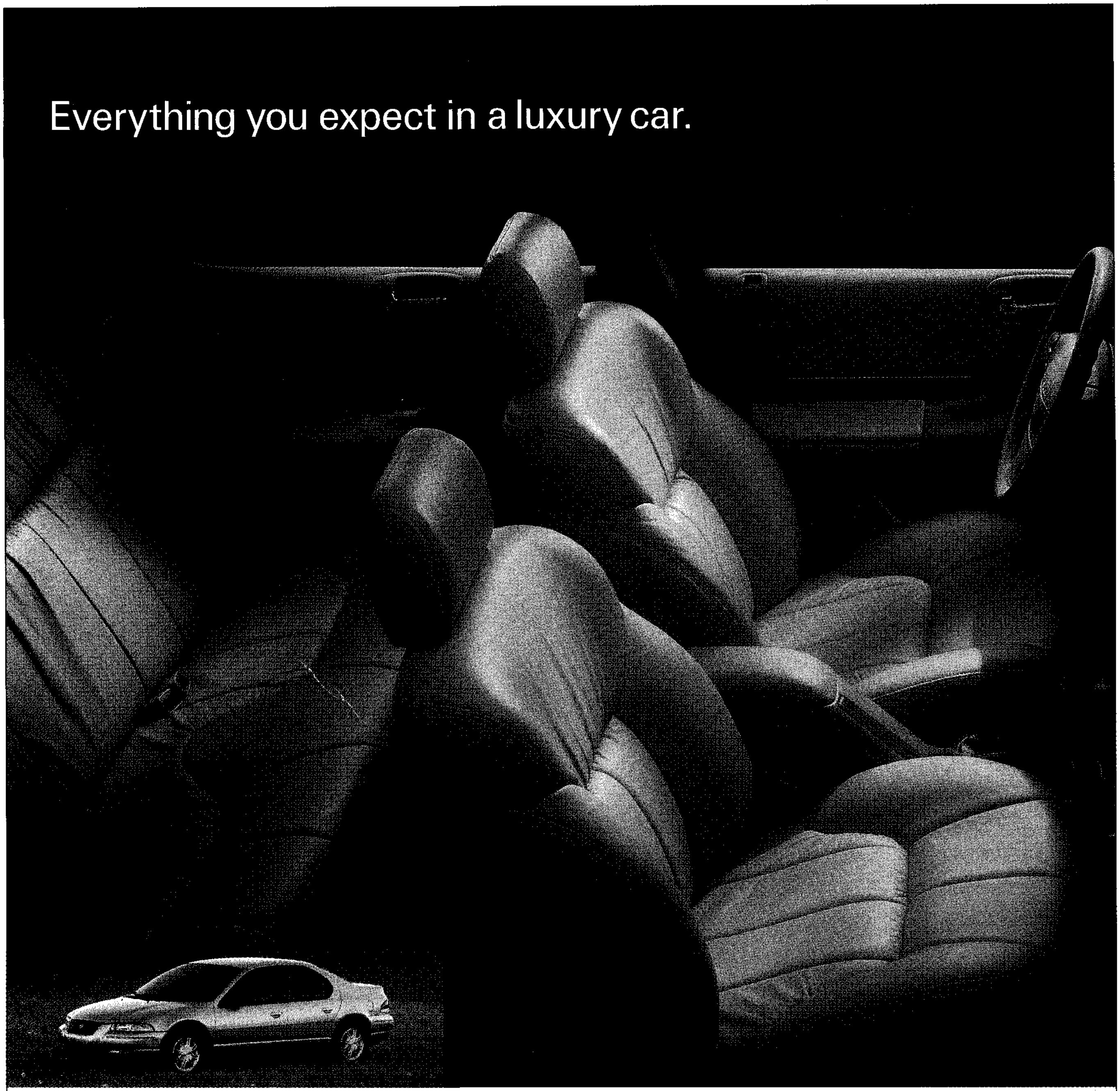
When I flushed the toilet, it felt as though my eardrums were being sucked out of my head.
(a) true
(b) false.

On takeoff, I would prefer not to
(a) black out
(b) feel cargo shifting beneath my feet
(c) hear the pilot shout, "Climb, you bastard, climb!"

On landing, I would rather not
(a) have the landing gear still up
(b) feel the plane bounce hundreds of feet back into the air
(c) take a refreshing dip in the water beyond the runway.

How would you measure the time it took your bags to arrive on the carrousel?
(a) minutes
(b) hours
(c) geologic time.

Given that I no longer have circulation in my legs or arms and have contracted tuberculosis from breathing fuel-efficient recycled air, and knowing that the president of the airline made fifteen million dollars last year, I feel
(a) happy
(b) very happy
(c) deliriously happy. ♦



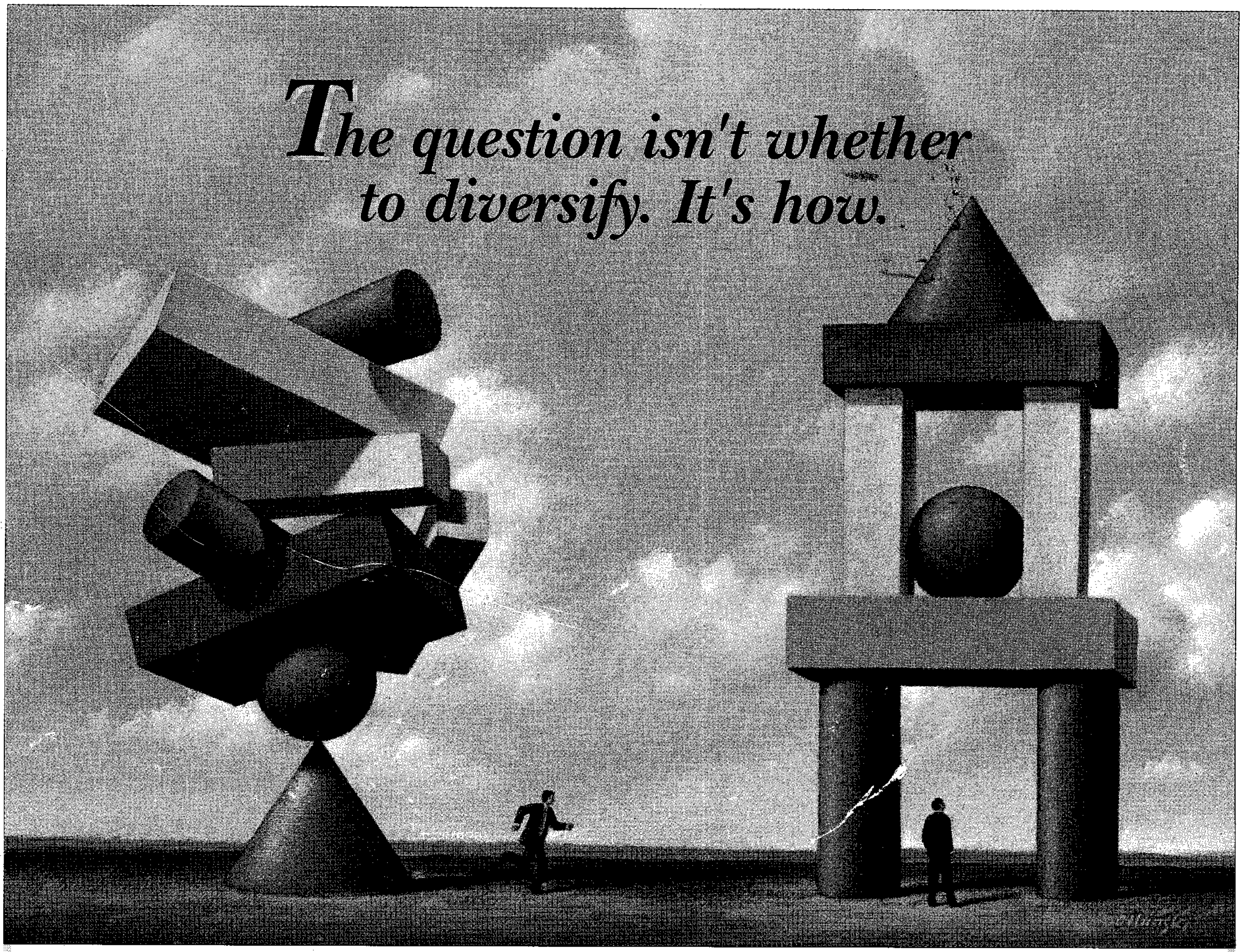
Well, not everything. It's just $18,995.*
The 1998 Chrysler Cirrus.

There are cars that are built to appeal to your passionate side—and to your practical side. The 1998 Chrysler Cirrus. For the passionate side: ▪ fully independent suspension ▪ multi-valve V6 engine ▪ speed-sensitive steering ▪ air conditioning with rear-seat vents ▪ premium six-speaker sound system ▪ power windows, mirrors and door locks ▪ cab-forward design with room for you and four friends ▪ and, at no extra charge, a new, luxurious, glove-soft leather-trimmed interior ▪ and eight-way power driver's seat. Now for the practical side. The new 1998 Chrysler Cirrus LXi, with all this, is just $18,995.* Now that's unexpected. Call 1.800.CHRYSLER for details.

CHRYSLER

ENGINEERED TO BE GREAT CARS

*MSRP after $1,000 cash back includes destination. Excludes tax. www.chryslercars.com.


The question isn't whether to diversify. It's how.

If you think your portfolio is diversified simply because you've invested in a variety of equities, U.S. Trust respectfully suggests you think again. To maximize returns and minimize the impact of volatility, it's necessary to diversify among and within different asset classes.

Taking each investor's specific objectives into consideration, U.S. Trust's experts recommend tax-intelligent investments across a broad range of asset classes. These include domestic equities, bonds, cash equivalents and international equities. Plus non-traditional investments that are not readily available to most investors, such as private equity funds and real estate investment funds. Through the strategic use of these investments, U.S. Trust has been able to help clients preserve and enhance wealth for generations.

For further information, please call Richard E. Foley, Managing Director, at 1-800-U.S.TRUST or visit www.ustrust.com.

A TRADITION OF GROWING ASSETS

U.S. TRUST

NEW YORK BOCA RATON COSTA MESA DALLAS GARDEN CITY GREENWICH HOUSTON LOS ANGELES
NAPLES PALM BEACH PORTLAND PRINCETON SAN FRANCISCO STAMFORD WASHINGTON D.C. WEST HARTFORD